

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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HOW NEAR ARE WE TO NEW TESTAMENT ORIGINALS?

WHILE many voices are heard in these days discrediting the Bible and ingeniously pointing out from one standpoint or in another the uncertainty and unreliability of its Sacred Records, it is indeed encouraging to note an occasional good and noble effort in its defense, especially when such defense is to be found in one of the leading newspapers of the country. We have reference in this instance to an article appearing in the editorial columns of the *Chicago Evening Post*, of September 8, 1923, which reads as follows:

"Both literalist and traditionalist should welcome the new versions of the Scriptures which scholarship produces from time to time. Assuming that authority increases as we approximate more closely the original manuscripts, it cannot be questioned that we catch more truly the authentic note of- the apostolic writers in recent English translation than in those of earlier days.

"The fact is we possess no fragment of New Testament text in any language which dates prior to the third century, and we had none as early as that until within the last twenty-five years. All our sources are either copies or translations.

"But these sources have become, not merely earlier, but vastly more numerous of late, so that modern students enjoy opportunities for comparison, check and confirmation or amendment, such as were not available to their predecessors.

"Much of great interest and value has come to light since the making of the authorized revision in 1895, the Twentieth Century version in 1900, or even the American revision in 1901, and, of course, scholarship is immensely better provided than it was in 1611, when the King James version was put together.

"The King James translators relied chiefly upon the manuscript known as the Codex Alexandrinus, dating from the fifth century. It lacked the first twenty-four chapters of Matthew's Gospel, two brief passages in John's Gospel, and two in Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. They had also the Codex Bezae, a sixth century manuscript, written in Greek and Latin, and containing -- with a few omissions -- all four Gospels and the closing verses of the third epistle of John. This interesting manuscript, representing, probably a church Bible compiled in the region of Byzantium, where both Latin and Greek were essential in order to reach everybody, was presented in 1581 to the University of Cambridge by Theodore Beza, friend of John Calvin.

"In the library of the Vatican was the Codex Vaticanus. This very valuable and early manuscript did not become available to scholarship in general, however, until after 1828. It was later very largely employed by Westcott and Hort in preparing their text of the New Testament, which is now widely recognized as the most authoritative redaction produced by contemporary scholars.

"Until 1859 these were the earliest and most important sources for translators. It is not believed that any of them dated before the fifth century, and none was complete.

"In 1844 Dr. Constantine Tischendorf visited the convent and monastery of St. Catherine on Mt. Sinai. In a big waste-paper basket he discovered parchments more than a thousand years old. The monks told him heaps of such manuscripts had been burned. He asked to be given the contents of the basket, but this was refused. Returning to the monastery fifteen years later, with a letter from the Czar, he obtained a great bundle of parchments as a loan. On examination it proved to be the whole of the Old Testament and New Testament and two apocryphal New Testament books. Tischendorf took the borrowed manuscripts to Petrograd. They were never returned. The czar sent the monks 7000 rubles, however, and conferred some decorations on them.

"This so-called Codex Sinaiticus is said to be earlier than any manuscript of its length which we possess among the sacred writings. It is dated by some authorities between 340-367 A.D., and is conceded to be fourth century.

"Charles L. Freer of Detroit, on December, 1906, bought from an Arab at Gizeh a parchment containing the four Gospels in the following order: Matthew, John, Luke, and Mark. Prof. Henry A. Sanders of the University of Michigan dates this manuscript, now known as the Washington Codex, as early as Tischendorf's -- that is fourth century. Prof. C. J. Goodspeed of the University of Chicago is more conservative and prefers a fifth century date.

"It is obvious that such discoveries as these have been of immense importance in New Testament translation and understanding. They place modern scholarship at a great advantage -in-comparison with that of King James' time.

"To these discoveries must be added scores of parchment and papyrus fragments representing early Christian New Testaments. At least eighty verses from the New Testament have been identified as third century writing, and many more as writing of a century later.

"These fragments, found in the Fayum, far from the centers of ecclesiastical authority of their time, are evidently pages from the privately owned Scriptures of individual Christians -- often of poor men. They have special interest and importance because they were free from priestly authority in their copying and compilation, and thus are a check on the church Bibles represented by the bulkier parchment manuscripts.

"The striking fact is that while verbal differences are found between parchments and papyri, pre-Constantine and post-Constantine manuscripts, no essential difference has been found-no difference affecting the New Testament message and teaching.

"It has been said by ablest archeological authority that 'the text of no other ancient book is so certain as that of the New Testament.'"

TIMOTHY A GOOD MINISTER OF JESUS CHRIST

(Continued from last issue)

"STIR UP THE GIFT OF GOD THAT IS IN THEE"

These reflections no doubt had much to do with the Apostle's prayers for Timothy "night and day"; and he now writes with a view to strengthening him along these lines, reminding him of the genuine faith and piety which he had inherited both from his mother and his grandmother, and assuring him that he believed that this had laid a deep foundation of true piety and faith in Timothy's own heart. We pause here to notice the fact everywhere kept prominent in the Scriptures that according to the Divine arrangement not only are the sins of the parents visited upon the children for several generations, but also that the faith and godliness of the parents, when rightly based on the Word of God and the true promises of that Word, lay the foundation of character in their children, upon which there is the greater hope that a life of godliness and usefulness may be built.

Not only does the Apostle strengthen Timothy's mind by a remembrance of the goodly heritage of faith and piety received from his mother and grandmother, but in addition he reminds him of the grace of God specially conferred upon him (Timothy) at that certain time when he made a full consecration of himself to the Lord, to be God's servant; when the Apostle, exercising his power as an Apostle, and as was common in those days, communicated to Timothy by supernatural power an outward gift or token of the Holy Spirit, through the laying on of his hands. The Apostle had evidently either heard or surmised that Timothy was allowing the fervor of his zeal for God to die out, and hence here he urges him to "stir up the gift of God which is in thee." The Greek word here rendered "stir up" has the significance of *re-ignite*: as though the Apostle said, Re-ignite your gift by renewed energy.

The next verse enforces this view, implying that the Apostle thought that Timothy was in danger of being overcome by *fear*, so as to allow his zeal to abate. And hence he reminds him that the spirit of the Lord imparted to His people is not a spirit of fear, but on the contrary a spirit of power, energy, zeal awakened by love; loving devotion to God, and a desire to please and serve Him; loving devotion to the truth, and a loving devotion to God's people and a desire to build them up in holy things, and to do good unto all men as we have opportunity. And yet, lest Timothy should

get the thought that the spirit of God led only to a zeal of energy -- that might at times be unwise in its exercise and do more harm than good -- the Apostle adds that the spirit of God which He bestows upon those who are begotten as His sons is a spirit of a "sound mind" -- a mind that is fortified and strengthened by the Word of the Lord on every subject, and hence, while thoroughly fearless of man, is wise in judging of times, seasons, and methods for using the energy of love which burns as a fire within the consecrated heart. O that all of God's children might appreciate, and more and more obtain the spirit of a sound mind by all of their talents might be used, not only fearlessly but wisely, in the Master's service.

THE DIVINE WORD MAKES WISE UNTO SALVATION

Continuing his exhortation (3:14, 15) the Apostle impresses upon Timothy two things: (1) that he had been taught of God, and (2) that this teaching of God had come to him through the Scriptures, which he assures him are sufficient to bring him all the way to the complete realization (in the resurrection) of that salvation which God has provided through faith in Christ Jesus. It will be well for us all to remember that all the graces of the spirit, all the progress in the knowledge of Divine things to which we already have attained, that may have really helped us nearer to God and to holiness, have come to us through the Scriptures of the Old Testament and through the words of our Lord and His inspired Apostles: nor will it ever be necessary to go to other channels for the true wisdom which would prepare us for the salvation promised.

Proceeding the Apostle shows (Ver. 16, 17) that the Scriptures which God inspired are profitable in every direction, and quite sufficient for the man of God, needing no supplements of visions or dreams, either his own or other men's. They are profitable for doctrine, containing the full statement of the Divine Plan; and no human authority is competent to add thereto. Who hath known the mind of the Lord? -- Who hath been His counselor? They are useful also for reproof toward others: No words that we can use in correcting the errors of others either in word or doctrine could possibly be as forcible for reproof, as the inspired words of Scripture. They are useful also for "correction," literally, "to bring up and establish one in the right." No standard of morals or of discipline can so thoroughly search out the heart and correct its waywardness as the Lord's Word.

Not, however, that God's Word is merely a statement of platitudes and moral instruction: it is far more than this; it searches the heart, the motives, the intentions, the thoughts, the ambitions, the aspirations. It pronounces a blessing upon the "pure in heart," those whose intentions are upright, honest, clean. The Word of the Lord as a correcter "in righteousness" takes hold upon all the affairs of life, and to those who are exercised thereby gives not only the spirit of a sound mind so that they are able to weigh and appreciate things from the true standpoint -- God's standpoint of righteousness; but it also inculcates a righteousness toward God, and the propriety of seeking that holiness of which God is the perfect example. Moreover, it reaches down to the relationships between husbands and wives, parents and children, friends and neighbors. If permitted, it settles every matter for us on lines of justice and love.

The Apostle assures us, accordingly, that God's teachings through the Scriptures are given "That the man of God may be furnished completely unto every good work." -- Revised Version

WORLD-WIDE BLESSINGS IN THE PROMISE TO ABRAHAM

"In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."--Gen. 12:1-4; 18:17, 18; 22:15-18; Heb. 11:8-10, 17-19.

NONE can read the story of Abraham and God's dealings with and promises to him with out realizing that the great spiritual lesson is that God is pleased to honor faith, and that the experiences of life which He permits to come to the faithful are intended for their development in faith and in the graces of the Holy Spirit, and that these all are unitedly a preparation for God's still greater work of the future.

Whenever God calls any for any purpose He sets before the called one an object, a reason, a motive, and this He did with Abraham. He not only called him out of his own country to a life of separation from sin, but He attached to that a great promise, which had a mighty influence upon the mind of Abraham and his children and all the Jewish nation, and since then upon all the spiritual Israelites, the Israelites indeed. The promise was that not only would Abraham receive a blessing, but that in and through him "all the families of the earth shall be blessed." This must have seemed a very obscure promise to Abraham, and his obedience to it was the more remarkable, so that he is held up as an example of a proper unquestioning faith in the word and wisdom of the Almighty -- "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. He might have objected that he could do more good in Ur, where wickedness prevailed, than he could accomplish in the mountains of Palestine, where he and others under his godly influence were comparatively separate from others of the world. His faith was shown in that he did not attempt to argue the matter with the Lord, but obeyed implicitly. So it is with many of God's spiritual Israel of the present time: the call of the Lord comes, and His direction of word and providence seems perhaps from one standpoint to be not in harmony with our anticipations respecting His will and the attainment of His purposes.

HE TRUSTED GOD

And alas! how few of nominal spiritual Israel take Abraham's course and get Abraham's blessing. The obedient are only "a little flock," to whom it will be the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom and its great work of blessing all the families of the earth. Many of them are inclined to resist God's providences, not exercising a sufficiency of faith. Some determine that it is their mission to convert the world; others. that they must engage in political reform; others that their efforts must be used in temperance work, thus bringing about a reign Of righteousness. We are not disputing that all of these are good works, and that good motives are behind them; but we do claim that many of the dear friends who are zealous in these ways are not sufficiently attentive to the Word of God to be obedient to it. As a consequence, many of them are disappointed and numbers are sidetracked.

After having reached the promised land Abraham was not sent as a missionary back to Haran or to Ur, nor indeed to the people who surrounded him. The Lord's message was, "Walk thou before Me and be thou perfect." God, of course, knew that Abraham was actually imperfect,

tainted by the fall, and this command, therefore, signified -that his heart should be perfect--his will, his intentions, and his conduct as nearly as possible in harmony with God's perfect will. The Apostle Paul shows us that he was not justified on account of any righteousness of his own, for he puts Abraham with the list of ancient worthies who were justified not by works of the Law, but by faith, and who, because of their faith, "had this testimony that they pleased God." It was his faith that led Abraham into a strange country away from his kindred, because he trusted God; it was faith that enabled him to stand various tests by the way, including the command to offer up his son as a sacrifice, his only son, in whom centered all the promises.

It was his faith in the promise of God -- that in a future time through his seed a reign of righteousness would be established in the earth--that led Abraham to look for that city [government] of sure foundation upon principles of righteousness--the heavenly city, the government or kingdom. of God's dear Son, which is to put down all insubordination and bring everything into subjection to the Divine will. The Seed of Abraham, the elect Church of this Gospel Age, is to exercise Divine power in the earth and cause every knee to bow and every tongue to confess; and after instituting a reign of righteousness and blessings thereby to all the families of the earth, is to deliver up the Kingdom, perfect and complete, to God, even the Father, at the close of the Millennial Age. This was the promise made to Abraham, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." And he was willing to waive his share in the governmental position and power of the present time under present adverse conditions, that he might have some share in the glorious Messianic Kingdom of the future.

"YE SHALL SEE ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB"

When Messiah's Kingdom, itself invisible, shall establish a reign of righteousness in the earth, it will have amongst men visible representatives, "princes in the earth." (Psa. 45:16.), And we are assured that Abraham will be one of these, and will thus have to do actively, prominently, with the establishment of the reign of righteousness and the demonstrations of justice and mercy and love to the world of mankind, "to all the families of the earth." He is mentioned as one of this class in Hebrews 11:39, 40. At one time, in company with others, we surmised that Abraham would have been placed in the Heavenly Kingdom of the spiritual class; but a more careful consideration of the matter shows us, to the contrary, that he belongs to the class of Ancient Worthies of whom the Apostle declares that God has provided some better thing for us than for them, although their blessing shall be a great one. Abraham, styled the father of the faithful, the Redeemer says, "rejoiced to see My day: and saw it and was glad." (John 8:56.) By faith he saw the Day of Christ, the Millennial Day, the Kingdom well founded; by faith he rejoiced in the glorious reign of righteousness then to be established.

But while this blessing is to come to the world through the seed of Abraham, the Scriptures indicate that a great change takes place by which

the seed, the child of Abraham, Christ, becomes greater than Abraham, as it is written, "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." Abraham, instead of being viewed any longer as the father of Messiah, will be recognized as one of His children, perfect on the earthly plane and made a prince amongst men, to be used as an active agent of the glorified Christ in dispensing the blessings secured by the great redemptive sacrifice. Referring to the matter, our Lord points out the fact that these Ancient Worthies will be visible to men, but properly enough says not a word about Himself and the Apostles or any of the Bride class being visible. The statement is, "Ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets." The fact that the still more notable ones in the Kingdom are not referred to as seen is an evidence that they will not be seen by the world, and this comports with the Lord's statement to some in His day, "Yet a little while and the world seeth Me no more." It agrees also with the declaration, "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." Only those changed from human to spirit nature, under the terms of the Lord's arrangement of this Gospel Age, will be spirit beings, and they alone therefore will be able to see, discern, the Lord and other spirit beings.

" WHICH SEED IS CHRIST "

The Apostle points out to us most distinctly that the seed of Abraham according to the flesh was Jesus, our Lord, who is now of the flesh no more, having sacrificed it and received the begetting of the Spirit to the new nature. He is now the glorified One, the Christ, Abraham's Lord, and David's Lord. And the Apostle points out to us a great mystery, the fact that God during this Gospel Age is selecting from amongst mankind some to be joint-heirs with Jesus in the Kingdom-to be members of the seed of Abraham. (Eph. 3:9; Acts 15:17; Rom. 8:17.) We ask how could this be, since the Law Covenant was added, and since Jesus alone fulfilled the terms of the Law Covenant, and ended all the hopes and prospects it contained? Surely no Jew preceded our Lord in the matter, and surely, since our Lord has finished His course, the offer of the Law Covenant is no longer open to a Jew, as it never was open to a Gentile. Where, then, is the prospect for either Jew or Gentile being joined with Christ, in joint-heirship with Christ in this Abrahamic Covenant?

We reply that we are accepted of the Lord, as the "Bride of Christ," the "Lamb's Wife." The Church, composed in the beginning exclusively of Jews, and subsequently almost exclusively of Gentiles, is as a whole accepted by the Lord as His Bride, and by becoming joined to Him and by union or marriage with Him these, whether Jews or Gentiles, are made His joint-heirs. This is the Apostle's clear statement of the matter, for after telling that Christ is the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16) he adds a word respecting the Church, his prospective Bride, saying, "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29.) In the one figure we are accepted as members of the Lord's Body, that is, when the Apostle says, "Ye brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise"; in another figure we are accepted as members of His Bride.

THE WIFE MADE READY

As our Lord was tested in all points yet without sin, so all of these who are counted worthy to be His members must similarly stand the testing to demonstrate their character-likeness to Him and their worthiness of a share in His glorious Kingdom. Hence it does not surprise us that everywhere throughout the Scriptures appeals are made to the Lord's people, not so much respecting what they shall do for others as what they shall do for themselves and for each other. We are not opposing the thought of doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, but emphasizing the other thought that we are to do good "especially to the household of faith." We are to "build one another up in the most holy faith," we are to "lay down our lives for the brethren," we are to "comfort one another," "edify one another." In a word the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, is to "make herself ready" -- not without the Bridegroom's supervision and assistance, but with it and as a part of it.

As the trial of faith was the most prominent feature of Abraham's testing, so it must needs be with us, His true children. It is the trial of your faith that is much more precious than gold, as the Apostle says, and he assures us that "without faith it is impossible to please God." For this reason it is required of those who now walk in the Narrow Way that they shall walk by faith and not by sight. When the time comes for the shining forth of the Sun of Righteousness and the scattering of the darkness and mystery that surrounds the Divine character and word and the permission of evil, there will be plenty ready and able to walk by sight; but the Lord is now looking for the few, the little flock, able and willing to walk by faith, through evil report and good report, to trust Him where they cannot trace Him, and to demonstrate their loyalty by their faithfulness and their endurance even unto death. The trials of the present time upon the Gospel Church are with a view to testing the character, with a view to determining who are worthy and who are unworthy to constitute the Seed of Abraham, which God promised shall ultimately bless all the families of the earth.

SURE TO BOTH THE SEEDS

The Apostle declares that God promised not the blessing through the seeds of Abraham, as of many, but "in thy seed," as of one. We have already seen that this one seed is the Christ, but we now notice that while there are not many seeds there is another seed beside the Messianic class -- a seed's seed, as it were. The Apostle clearly intimates this in his declaration respecting the Law and the Gospel, that the object was "that the promise, might be sure to both the seeds," not only that which is according to the Spirit, but also that which is according to the Law. This was intimated also in the fact that a promise was made to Ishmael as well as to Isaac. But the promise to Ishmael proceeded through Isaac, the one seed of promise. Similarly the Lord's blessing on all the families of the earth must proceed through the one Seed, which is Christ-the Messianic seed of Abraham.

St. Paul makes very clear that there is a double allotment of Divine mercy and provision-one portion to the spiritual seed and another portion to the

natural seed of Abraham. In Romans 11, where, after describing the rejection of the natural seed of Abraham and the acceptance of the spiritual seed, he points to the fact that at the end of this Gospel Age the spiritual seed will be complete, and then he declares that the Divine blessing shall go to the natural seed of Abraham again-to those who were once broken off, rejected and blinded because they were unable to realize and appreciate the spiritual part of the promise. For them then remains an earthly or natural part, and blessing will surely come to them, because God has already declared that "the Deliverer shall come out of Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob, because this is my covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the Gospel they were enemies for your sakes, but as touching the promises of God they are beloved for the father's sakes: for the gifts and callings of God are things not to be repented of." -- Rom. 11:26-29.

After thus most clearly specifying that God's gifts and callings from the remote past included the restoration of the Jews to Divine favor at the close of the Gospel Age, the Apostle proceeds to show how this blessing must come through the spiritual seed, saying, "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy" -- through the mercy of the Gospel Church, the spiritual seed of Abraham, tender Christ their Head.

"ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH"

The turning of God's blessing to Israel at the close of this Gospel Age will include the exaltation to honorable service of the worthy ones of the past dispensation, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the Prophets -- "princes in all the earth" -- ensamples of perfect manhood, leaders of the people. But it will mean more than this, for the promise was not merely that through the seed of Abraham, spiritual, the natural seed of Abraham should be blessed, but "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Hence, as the Apostle points out, the Gospel Church is a "first-fruits unto God of His creatures" in one sense, a first-fruits on a spirit plane, and natural Israel will be a first-fruits of His creatures on an earthly plane; and in proportion to their willingness, under the guidance of the Ancient Worthies, they may be helpful to all the families of the earth in spreading knowledge of the great Messiah and the rules and regulations of His Kingdom, for the blessing and uplifting of all the families of the earth.

Mark how the Apostle declared that if the rejection of Israel meant a blessing to the Gentiles, will not the regathering of Israel signify life from the dead to the world in general. (Rom. 11:15.) It surely will. In order for the seed of Abraham according to the flesh to realize the blessings God has promised, an awakening from the sleep of death will be necessary, since God is no respecter of persons. In a general sense it follows that these blessings which He has covenanted to give first to Israel, He is equally willing and able to give to all man kind in due time. O, how much of goodness and mercy God can crowd into a few words! How little Abraham was able to comprehend the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of Divine blessing that was conferred upon him when the Lord said "Because thou hast done this, in blessing I will bless thee and in

multiplying I will multiply thy seed, and it shall be as the stars of heaven and the sand upon the seashore."

How little Abraham could have understood that the seed that was to be as the stars of heaven is the spiritual seed, and that the seed that shall be as the sand upon the seashore is the natural seed. In a word, not only those of fleshly Israel who accepted the blessings and favors of the Kingdom, but humanity in general, all the families of the earth, will be privileged to become the seed of Abraham through faith and obedience, even as we of this Gospel Age, who are Gentiles, have been privileged through faith and obedience to become joint-heirs in spiritual Israel with those Jews who were Israelites indeed at the First Advent.

God's promise to Abraham was abundantly fulfilled in his own-person: it was fulfilled also in his natural seed and in his spiritual seed. Surely, of all, the latter is the most blessed. What more could God say to us or do for us than He has already said and done? Lifting us from the horrible pit and miry clay of sin and condemnation, He has placed our feet upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and put a new song in our mouths. Yea, more, He has adopted us into His family and made us heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."--1 Pet. 1:4, 5.

The declaration is added, "I will bless them that bless thee, and I will curse him that curseth thee." This does not refer to blessing by the lips or cursing by the lips merely, but rather appertains to conduct--he that does good to you, who favors you, I will favor; he that injures you I will permit-to be injured. How this has been fulfilled in the case of the natural Jew, even in his outcast condition! Those nations which have maltreated the Jew have suffered; those which have treated him with kindness have been more or less blessed. And if we apply the same test to the spiritual Seed of Abraham, does it not fit even better? Has there not come a blessing of the Lord to all those who have either said or done kindness to His true people, His faithful? and has not blight followed upon those who in any sense of the word have sought to do injury to the Lord's Anointed? "If God be for us who can be against us?"

BE PATIENT

"The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart."--1 Tim. 1: 5.

They are such dear, familiar feet that go
Along the path with ours,--feet fast or slow,
But trying to keep pace. If they mistake,
Or tread upon some flower that we would take
Upon our breast; or bruise some reed;
Or crush poor hope until it bleed,
We must be mute.

Nor turning quickly to impute
Grave faults; for they and we
Have such a little way to go, can be
Together such a little while upon the way
We must be patient while we may.

So many little faults we find;
We see them, for not blind
Is love. We see them, but if you and I
Perhaps remember them -- some by and by
They will not be
Faults then, grave faults to you and me;
But just odd ways, mistakes, or even less,
Remembrances to bless.
Days change so many things, yea, hours,
We see so differently in sun and showers;
Mistaken words tonight
May be so cherished by tomorrow's light, --
There's such a little way to go.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JEREMIAH

SERIES II

JEREMIAH AS A REVIVALIST-HIS FIRST DISCOURSE

Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem.--Jer. 2:1.

THE first twelve chapters of Jeremiah have reference to the Prophet's earliest experiences in connection with his Divine calling. They describe events and experiences which he had during the period beginning with the good king Josiah's thirteenth year and ending with the king's death. From the very beginning of his reign Josiah's heart was toward the Lord; and in the year that Jeremiah was called, Josiah was zealously engaged in a work of reform. The sacred historian has very graphically described the character of Josiah, as well as the reform work that was occupying the attention of the young king at the time when Jeremiah received his call. In carrying out this reform work "his measures were as drastic as those of Cromwell and his soldiers in their effort to remove every vestige of popery from the churches and public buildings" in England. In full accord with this Josiah's character and work are described by the sacred writer:

"In the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, [only 16 years] he began to seek after the God of David his father; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images. And they break down the altars of Baalim in his presence; and the sun images, that were on high above them, he cut down; and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images, he break in pieces, and made dust of them, and strewed it upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them. And he burned the bones of the priests upon their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem."--2 Chron. 34: 3-5.

In the first twelve chapters of Jeremiah there is scarcely any reference made to the great reforms that were being introduced by Josiah; and

Jeremiah is scarcely mentioned by the sacred historian of the Book of Kings. There can be no question, however, that he was very closely associated with the king and the few faithful ones who gathered around Josiah and who were assisting him in his work of reform. Among these are mentioned Shaphan, Hilkiah, who was perhaps Jeremiah's father, the Prophet Zephaniah, the Prophetess Huldah, and Jeremiah's own friend, Baruch.

The work of reform was a difficult one. The people, led by the degenerate priesthood and false prophets at the time the reform work began, were given over to idolatry. The worship of idols had many fascinations, and its appeal to the sensual passions was so strong that the great mass of the people were very loath to return even in a formal way to the more austere and pure worship of Jehovah. The words of Jeremiah -- "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophecy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and My people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?" -- describe the condition of things existing at the time this reform work was going on.

GOD VEILS THE FUTURE OF THOSE HE CALLS

It is not difficult to imagine the zeal and earnestness which characterized the young Prophet as he entered upon his ministry at this time. When first the word of the Lord came to him, after receiving his Divine call, he was evidently thrilled through and through with the thought that he was to be used to speak the Divine message. It was very much with him, doubtless, as it is with the true followers of the Lord today when first they feel the power of the Divine spirit. They may have been told, as Jeremiah was, of the inevitable conflict which their entrance into the consecrated life involves, but as it was with him, so with the Lord's people today, they do not stop to think of the difficulties, the oppositions, and all the discouragements, from the natural standpoint, which they are to meet with.

Jeremiah had been told that kings and princes, priests and prophets, as well as the people would all combine to oppose and make light of and ridicule his messages. But as long as he knew that he was representing the great Jehovah, this did not deter him. "In the first blush of his young faith he thought more of the presence of Jehovah"; and this was right. Had he not been told that he would be made "a defenced city, and an iron pillar and brazen walls against the whole land"? What cared he for his opposers, if the great God of all would be with him. But alas, he would have to learn by experience the terribleness of the opposition, and perhaps by failure how to obtain the Divine strength and power to stand out against his opposers. How tenderly God veils the future of those He calls! He leads step by step. Jeremiah must first learn the lesson of his own weakness. "But," as one has said, "there is a difference between the elastic hopefulness of youth and the experience of manhood. The early chapters of Jeremiah differ from his Lamentations, as the first green of spring from the sere foliage of autumn."

It is not unreasonable to suppose that Jeremiah, at this period of his work, had great hopes that the nation could be brought back from its fallen condition. Hence his disappointment at the seeming ill success of his efforts. No other Prophet, in his writings, reveals so fully the inmost recesses of his heart as does Jeremiah. It is evident from the sacred narrative that he possessed, naturally, not only a shy and timid disposition, but that he was also susceptible at times to depression, discouragement, and even despondency. (Jer. 15:10; 20:7.) The narrative containing the prophetic utterances is frequently broken by outbursts of prayer or complaint; and the bitter opposition of his enemies wrings from him occasional words of indignation and even cries for vengeance. However, the promise given unto him by Jehovah at his call, and renewed later in a season of discouragement (chap. 15) that He would make him a brazen wall and an iron pillar, was laid hold of by him and in the strength and power of that promise he continued faithful and came off victorious, notwithstanding the fact that the trials increased with more and more severity to the end. Belonging as he did to both the orders of priest and prophet, his ministry called him to witness against both at a time when these offices had sunk to the very lowest depths of degradation.

THE NEWLY-FOUND BOOK OF THE LAW PRONOUNCED JUDGMENTS

The work of reform under Josiah progressed slowly, and it would seem that it might have ceased altogether, had not an incident which occurred in the king's eighteenth year added impetus to it. At the time of the incident the temple was undergoing repairs. It had been stripped of the lewd emblems of idolatry, and the degenerate priests had, unwillingly, been obliged to vacate. The incident referred to was the finding of the book of the law in the temple by Hilkiah the priest. It is thought by many that Hilkiah was the father of Jeremiah.

The rabbinical tradition states that this book of the law was found inside a heap of stones where it was hidden when the wicked king Ahaz destroyed all the other copies of the book. Some understand that it was a complete copy of the Pentateuch; others that it was the book of Deuteronomy only. It seems unquestionable that this portion of the Pentateuch was appointed to be written by each king on the occasion of his accession to the throne, and read before the assembly of Israel once in each seven years. (See Deut. 31:10-12.) It is stated that Shaphan, the scribe, read some portions of the book to the king. The portion amongst others that arrested the king's attention particularly was doubtless chapter 28, which records the judgments that would befall the nation for disobedience. When the king heard the words, we are informed that he "rent his clothes," and in great haste he sent a deputation of his most trusty friends to the place where Huldah the Prophetess dwelt. Their mission was to have her inquire of the Lord for him, and for all the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that was found; for it contained the sad information expressed by Josiah in the words: "Great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words

of this book, to do according to all that which is written concerning us." -- 2 Kings 22:13.

The most important object of the inquiry, evidently, was to learn whether it would be possible for the judgments to be averted. The answer that was given by the Lord was that the judgments must fall, but that they would be held back during Josiah's life. The Lord's words to Josiah were, "Behold, therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place." The reason Josiah was to be spared from seeing the judgments fall upon the city and nation is stated to be, "Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before Me; I also have heard thee, saith the Lord."--Ver. 19.

THE FAR-REACHING INFLUENCE OF A GOOD KING

The discovery of this book seemed to have made as great a sensation amongst the people of the nation as did that of Luther's discovery of the Latin Bible in the old Augustinian monastery at Erfurth. The narrative in 2 Kings informs us that on receiving this message the young king Josiah by proclamation called a convocation of the people of Judah as also the inhabitants of Jerusalem. From a platform erected in the inner court of the temple, the king read all the words of the book of the covenant which had been found in the house of the Lord. "And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes, with all their heart, and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that, were written in this book"; and we read further "that all the people stood to, [or pledged to observe] the covenant." -- 2 Kings 23:1-3.

In this way did the great work of reformation break out afresh. The tide of feeling concerning the matter seems to have risen high, and for a time the movement was popular. The priests of Baal were suppressed, and everything that savored or reminded of idolatry was cast out of the temple and its precincts. Thus, so far as the outward observance of the Lord's statutes was concerned, Israel once more became true in their allegiance to the God of their fathers, and idolatry for a time was cast aside. However, while the temple courts on all public occasions became thronged with the worshipers, and while the rites and forms of the Levitical code were rigorously kept up, and every point of the ceremonials given to Moses was observed, nevertheless, there was no real change in the inner lives of the people. The movement may well be likened to many of the great popular revivals that take place in these days--revivals which, because of a failure to reach the inner life, the heart, soon decline, leaving frequently those who engage in them in a more deplorable condition than before. As one has said concerning the reformation under Josiah: "The reformation was entirely superficial. Beneath* the fair exterior, the grossest forms of evil were seething in hideous corruption, now and again breaking forth into the

light of day, but awaiting the death of Josiah, when they once more asserted themselves."

It was during the progress of this movement that Jeremiah received his Divine call. When we come to know the deep piety of the young Prophet, and the true and exalted conception of the requirements connected with the service of Jehovah which he held, it is not difficult to imagine how profoundly disappointed he was at the result of a movement that at first seemed to give promise of so much. His own deep piety and reverence for Jehovah enabled him to detect the true character of the movement at once; and we have it recorded that he was strongly moved to seek an opportunity in which he could show to the people that unless the reform work went deeper, the wrath of God, which was gathering like a thunder cloud over his beloved country, would not be averted.

"GO AND CRY IN THE EARS OF JERUSALEM"

It is quite evident from the words of the sacred narrative in chapter two, that Jeremiah was actively engaged in the work with Josiah-that is, the preliminary work of arousing the people to forsake the idolatries into which they had fallen. Until the idols were thrown down, and the idolatrous priests were removed, and the false prophets were made to cease, no real reform could take place. The people had forsaken the Lord, and had become worshipers of the gods of the nations around them. The word of the Lord to, such is, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him." Jeremiah's first sermon was to this end.

Jeremiah was directed by the Lord to "go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem," and it was at his obedience to this command that he had given to him his first discourse. Making use of the translation of another which seems to bring out the thought more clearly, the sermon which is addressed to the people begins with the words: "Thus saith the Ever-living: I attended you in your infancy; I loved you in your youth; guided you after Me in the desert to a land you had not cultivated, for Israel to dedicate to the Ever-living the first of its products." The young Prophet swayed by the Spirit of Jehovah briefly reviews the history of the chosen people, emphasizing particularly the Lord's care over them through the wilderness, until at last they entered the land of promise. "But," says the Lord through the Prophet, "You went and defiled My country and My estate, by attaching yourselves to abominations." The youthful Prophet next calls the attention of the back-slidden people to the nations who lived around them, in an endeavor to show them that these heathen were far more consistent than they.

HAVE FORSAKEN THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATERS

The Lord, continuing to speak through the Prophet, giving emphasis to this point, said: "Hath a [single] nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? But My people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit." How clear are these words -that it is Jehovah Himself speaking through the Prophet, We have here an example of what the Apostle meant when he said, "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

Jehovah continues to speak through the yielded lips of the Prophet, making use of a most remarkable, striking, and effective figure to send home to the consciences of His listening people, the foolish mistake, indeed, the great sin which they had committed. His words were: "Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, and be very desolate, saith the Lord. For My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

The figure or illustration employed by God through the Prophet is that of a scene coming first to view among the mountains. In a green opening in a wooded region a fountain of pure water is seen bubbling from the depths;

and beginning to flow, it forms a little brook that pours its clear, pellucid waters downward into the valley below. Along its banks the green verdure grows. It forms a never failing stream. It grows wider and deeper as it pursues its onward course, as if intended to furnish pure, refreshing water in abundance, all, and more than was necessary to supply the people who lived in the little villages and hamlets that had grown up all along its banks. It flows on and on, all the time becoming broader and deeper, furnishing a sufficient supply of pure water for the inhabitants of the larger towns and cities. We do not need to be told that the Author of that which this Fountain represents, is Jehovah Himself, and its waters are designed to represent the great blessings and privileges that He set before His ancient people, the obedient ones, under the Old Covenant Dispensation. The words of this Covenant and its promised conditional blessings are briefly summed up in Deut. 8. These may have been some of the very words read by the king to the assembled multitude. They read:

"Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, and fear Him. For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass [copper]. When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good, land which He hath given thee.

"Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping His commandments, and His judgments, and His statutes, which I command thee this day: lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein: and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought; where there was no water; Who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that He might humble thee, and that He might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end; and thou say in thine heart, My power, and the might of mine hand, hath gotten me 'this wealth. But thou shalt remember the, Lord thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant, which He swear unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

"And it shall be, if thou do at all. forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day, that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the Lord your God." -- Deut. 8:6-20.

Thus do we have described the promised blessings to come to the Chosen Nation if obedient. It is these blessings that are portrayed by Jehovah

through the lips of the young Prophet, in the beautiful figure above described. But strange to say, the words in the figure used by the Prophet imply that this fountain, this brook, this stream is utilized only by the very few. Scarcely a person is seen with either pitcher, cup, or pail, supplying themselves with the water, so much needed. Thus speaks Jehovah through His Prophet to His chosen nation.

We have given to us here a picture from God's standpoint of the nation in Jeremiah's day--the nation that He had made a covenant with, that if they would hearken unto Him and obey His voice he would bless them with all earthly blessings. All this is conveyed in the words, "They have forsaken Me the Fountain of living waters."

ISRAEL, THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

"Ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."--Exod. 19:1-6; Isa. 43:9-11; 45:20-22.

MANY and valuable were the lessons that were given to ancient Israel and through them to Israel according to the spirit, of this dispensation. Shortly after the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, on their way to Canaan, they reached the Valley Rephidim and were thirsty and found no water. Here Moses, in the name of the Lord, smote the rock with his rod, and from it gushed water, abundantly refreshing Israel at this time, and as a rivulet following them through much of their subsequent journey.

St. Paul, by inspiration, points out to us that that rock represented Christ, that the smiting of the rock represented the putting of Christ to a shameful death, but that only by this means is the Water of Life provided for those who desire to be the people of God. As the waters of that rock followed the Israelites, so the stream of God's favor, through the sacrifice of Christ, refreshes Christ's disciples throughout their wilderness journey.

Refreshed in body and in faith, Israel journeyed onward, but encountered new obstacles. The Amalekites, a warlike people, considered the coming of Israel as an invasion of their country, and attacked them in battle. A people used to peaceful pursuits, as the Israelites had for centuries been, would naturally be at a disadvantage in a conflict with such opponents. Yet God gave them the victory. He indicated, however, that it was not by their prowess or skill, but of His grace that they conquered.

Moses, stationed upon a high hill, lifted up his hands in prayer to God for the people. While he did so, success was theirs; but when he ceased thus to pray, the Amalekites were the victors. Perceiving this, Aaron and Hur assisted in holding up the hands of Moses until the battle terminated with success for Israel. God thus indicated that Moses was the advocate or representative of Israel, and that without him they could do nothing.

In the antitype, we realize that Spiritual Israelites have conflicts with enemies too mighty for them without the Lord's assistance. The world, the flesh and the Devil make common cause against all who are seeking the

Heavenly Canaan. We who are followers of Jesus have success in our warfare only as we have Him as our Advocate--"We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous." Through Him we may come off conquerors, yea, more than merely conquerors, victors in the highest sense -"through Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood."

THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD PROFFERED

All of God's dealings with the Israelites were in accord with His great covenant made with Abraham, and certified with the Divine Oath--"In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Neither Moses nor any of those who followed him could possibly have understood the full import of this great oath-bound Promise; for it is a double promise, the spiritual portion of which was hidden until God's due time--at the First Advent. Even since then, St. Paul assures us, it is a hidden mystery, appreciated only by the very few. "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him, and He will show them His covenant."

The promise is divided into three parts: first, Abraham himself (and all the Ancient Worthies, whom he represented) was to have a share; second, Abraham's Seed was to be the chief agent, or channel, of blessing; and third, all the families of the earth were to be blessed as recipients of God's favor through these channels. But only by the light of the Holy Spirit during this Gospel Age are these lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the Abrahamic Covenant made manifest.

In calling Abraham, God virtually said, as set forth by another: 'Abraham, I intend to bless the world, and I will tell you about it in advance. Through your posterity I will do it, for I have found you faithful as a servant.' St. Paul was one of those who were included in that promise. (See Heb. 7: 9, 10.) Abraham was not under the sentence of the Law; but he had the promise that a blessing would come to him and to all others.

"Several hundred years after this God entered into a special covenant with the nation of Israel. They bound themselves by the Law Covenant that they would do certain things; and God promised that the reward would be eternal life. But they could not fulfil the conditions, and consequently they came under the sentence of death. Therefore, they were worse off in that respect than if they had never come under the Law Covenant, for they had already received, prospectively, the forgiveness of sin; but now, being unable to keep the Law Covenant, they came *again* under condemnation to death.

"The remainder of the world of mankind was condemned *once*. God had said that He would bless all those who kept the Law; and the Jews had their opportunity but *failed* because of inherent weakness. So the Law, St. Paul states, brought them death instead of blessing. How did this awaken in them what he says here? 'I had not known sin *but by the Law*.' Suppose that before the Law was given, a man did not know that it was wrong to steal or to kill. Not knowing it, and *not having come tinder any law* telling about it, *he had not sinned against the law*. But before that Law Covenant came, says the Apostle, not having the Law specified to me, I was not under it. But *now I know*; and sin came upon me because I *could not keep what I saw and what I had agreed to do*.--Rom. 7:7-25.

"*Sin lives*. What sin? Original sin, Adamic sin, which passed from Adam through heredity upon all his children. God said to Abraham, I intend to bless all the families of the earth. I intend to remove the curse. Those who

had failed to keep the Law had come under *the curse of the Law* as well as under Adam's *curse*, so that *in addition* to the curse which came upon all of Adam's children, the Jew came under the curse of the Law. That which the Jew thought to be unto *life*, he found to be unto *death*. The Law Covenant promised that if the Jew would *do these things* he would *live*. But he found that he could not do them, and the Covenant brought condemnation and death upon him. The Apostle does not say that the Law Covenant was just and good, but that the Law was good, the Law was just-not the Covenant. God's Law is always the same, and always will be the same; but He will make a better *Covenant*; for finding fault with the Law Covenant, He said, 'I will make a New Covenant.' If God was not finding fault with the Old Covenant, why make a new one?--Heb. 8:8-13.

"The unsatisfactory feature of the Covenant was that it could not give life to Israel. God knew this beforehand, but *they* did not. God wished them to learn this great lesson that because of their own deficiency they needed the merit of the sacrifice of the Redeemer. The whole world must learn this lesson. Whoever will not learn it will not make progress; - but God's promise is that in due time all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and that all shall understand clearly the conditions of God's arrangements and the provision He has made."

When inviting the Israelites to come out of Egypt, God did not explain the Covenant to them nor tell them which portion they might have a share in. But when they had come to Mt. Sinai, God made inquiry as to whether or not they could keep the Divine Law, and thus prove themselves eligible to the highest favor included in that Covenant.

In other words, the Lord said to them at Mt. Sinai, Are you ready now to enter into a Covenant of full consecration to do My will? You have seen how I dealt with the Egyptians in delivering you. You have seen how, ever since then, I have borne you on eagles' wings over all the trials and difficulties of your journey to this place. Have you faith? Have you loyalty? Do you wish to enter into a Covenant? "If ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My commandments, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people . . . and ye shall be unto Me a Kingdom of priests and an holy nation."

TYPICAL OF NEW COVENANT

While the Israelites knew that they were the favored seed of Abraham, the natural heirs of the promises, it was proper that they should know also that they would be unsuitable for the Lord's use in blessing the other nations with His Law unless they themselves were able to keep that Law and to instruct others how to keep it. With this understanding, that they were ready to do the Lord's will and thus to be separated by Him to be the kings and priests of the whole world, a Law Covenant was made with them, and Moses was appointed its mediator. Whoever would keep those commandments might live forever; and in proportion as he kept them he would be entitled to earthly favors.

St. Paul, in Hebrews 12:18-24, points us to the antitype of Israel's experiences. As Israel was delivered from Pharaoh and his hosts, so ultimately all mankind is to be delivered from Satan and his hosts, the fallen angels, and from all evil influences. As the journey to the Promised Land brought the Israelites to Mt. Sinai and the Law Covenant, so the journey of God's people will ultimately bring all the willing, obedient, and faithful to the antitype of Mt. Sinai, namely Mt. Zion, God's Kingdom, for which Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven."

Meantime, Jesus has become the antitypical Moses and Leader of the people, and in harmony with Jehovah's Program, He has been selecting the members, or associates and joint-heirs. St. Paul explains this to us, saying, "God gave Jesus to be the Head over the Church, which is His Body." St. Peter explains that this great antitypical Moses must be raised up from amongst the brethren first, before the blessing of restitution can come to mankind in general. -- Acts. 3:19-23.

This entire Gospel Age has been devoted to the gathering of the members of the Christ Body. And when the last member shall have made his calling and election sure, this Age will end, and the more glorious work of the Messianic Age will begin.

SHAKE HEAVENS AND EARTH

The antitype of the old Law Covenant will be the inauguration of the New Covenant at the Second Advent of Jesus. The basis of this new and better Covenant was completed at Calvary by our Lord's sacrifice of Himself. He has since been completing His "better sacrifices" by presenting the bodies of His saints, holy and acceptable, to God. (Rom. 12:1.) Soon the "better sacrifices" will be completed, and the greater Mediator will have been fully raised up from amongst the brethren. Then everything will be ready for the inauguration of the New Covenant, to bless the world of mankind with knowledge, and with opportunity for restitution to earthly blessings and perfection.

St. Paul points out that this is what we are coming to -- approaching -- "the General Assembly and Church of the First-born," whose names are written in Heaven. He declares that we may expect an antitype of the stirring scenes mentioned in our lesson. As at Mt. Sinai the literal mountain shook, lightnings flashed, and the voice of God was heard as the sound of a great trumpet, so here the antitype will come. The great trumpet here will be the seventh trumpet, the trump of Goo. The storm and tempest and shaking here in the antitype will mean the shaking of the ecclesiastical heaven's and the social, political, and financial earth.

The Apostle prophetically assures us that everything shakeable will be shaken to its destruction, that only the unshakeable things will remain. That is to say, the Messianic Kingdom then to be established will completely overturn everything not in harmony with righteousness, justice and truth. This is merely a prelude to the great blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant then to be fully-ushered in, for the blessing of all the families of

the earth. Numerous are the Old Testament prophecies that carry us forward to that glorious day and suggest what manifold blessings will be shed abroad upon all the inhabitants of the earth. Many of the prophetic messages appear to be addressed to ancient Israel as though they were intended for them alone and as though all the Divine promises centered in Israel according to the flesh, but when we remember that they as a nation were pictorial or typical of the New Creation, spiritual Israel of this Gospel dispensation, all is plain, and we see that the promises contained in the Old Testament, while having an application to fleshly Israel and will be fulfilled in them, yet they will be more completely fulfilled in the new and holy nation chosen out of all nationalities during this Gospel Age to be the Bride and Joint-heir of God's dear Son, and in the blessings that will go to all the world of mankind when His Kingdom is established in the earth.

The Body of the spiritual Seed of Abraham, of which Christ Jesus is the Head-His faithful, saintly followers are now being tested as respects their worthiness for so high a station. St. Paul's words are very forcefully applied to these: "Let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God, with reverence and awe."

DANIEL THE BELOVED OF JEHOVAH

SERIES XI

THE MIRACULOUS DELIVERANCE

"Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day."--Dan. 6:13.

FROM the human standpoint it would appear that there was no possible way of escape for Daniel. He undoubtedly knew of the hatred is of these men, and also of the wicked and wily snare or trap they had laid for him. It would be of no use for him to make complaint to the king against them -- to do so would be "to indict all the officials of the realm, and to dash himself to destruction against the combination of numbers. To remonstrate with the king against the decree would seem like taking sides against a popular sentiment of the nation, present him in the attitude of a revolutionist trying to set aside one of the proudest traditions and most sacred political doctrines of the Medes and Persians, and make him appear to be a disloyal opposer of the king's acknowledged honor and dignity. To abandon his position and flee the country would show a cowardly spirit, and had but little promise of success. Indeed, he was so hedged on all sides that nothing seemed left for him as a true servant of Jehovah, but to compose himself to his fate, go on with his accustomed devotions and meekly trust the result to God." -- Seiss.

THE MAN OF PRAYER

He chose, as we know he would, the latter course, and simply continued in the performance of his accustomed duties; and when he "knew that the writing was signed, he went to his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, *as he did aforetime.*" He did not do this in an ostentatious manner, as if by so doing to parade his piety, to show that he was a worshiper of God; neither was he held back by a fear of punishment from engaging in his accustomed daily devotions. This was his customary *time* and *place* of prayer; and the *manner* he offered up his devotions to God was the same as he had done aforetime. The chamber or upper room, it is most reasonable to suppose, was the most retired place in the house, and one in which he would be the least liable to be seen or beard. For this very reason he had aforetime selected this as a sacred spot to offer his devotions.

Nothing else now remained to hinder the wicked plot from reaching a successful termination, but for some of these men to intrude upon Daniel in his daily devotion and worship of his God, This was a very easy task, for it is evident that they were well aware of these religious habits of the Medo-Persian Prime Minister. They knew *where* as well as *when* to find him engaged in his accustomed devotions and they assembled for the purpose and found him.

Accompanied with a sufficient number of witnesses to the fact that he had disobeyed the king's decree, a deputation of these counselors again sought an entrance into the king's presence; and one of their number, with assumed hypocritical indignation at Daniel's act, thus addressed the monarch: "Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" The unsuspecting king gave answer: "The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not." It seems very clear that up to this time the king had not suspected his counselors of having a sinister motive in getting him to sign this decree. Indeed, it was just at this stage of the whole affair that the wicked plotters first mentioned the name of Daniel. It was, doubtless, a complete sur prise to the king when he heard their accusation against his faithful servant in the words now addressed to him: "That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day."

"THE LAWS OF THE MEDES AND PERSIANS"

It is not difficult to imagine how great was the king's amazement and sorrow as he realized what his hastiness in signing the decree had led to. However, it was of no manner of use now for him to reproach himself for what his hasty act of folly had wrought. It was certainly a cruel trap that these men had set for both the king and his faithful servant. He had only two courses from which to choose. Should he himself break a law -an act which would be contrary to the customs of the Medes and Persians? or should he take away the life of a man whose character he had come to admire, and whose services he had come to so greatly value? It is

positively certain that he was strongly in favor, if it were possible, of repealing or disannulling the decree or setting aside the penalty in Daniel's case; for we read that "he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him" (Ver. 14), which would mean, doubtless, that he presented all the arguments possible in order to deliver his faithful and guileless officer. It would seem that his efforts were put forth to the end of finding some way whereby the law might be repealed, or the penalty be commuted; but the counselors met every appeal of the king by citing the unchangeableness of the Medo-Persian laws, and were united in their clamorous appeal for the execution of the decree. The king was compelled finally to give his consent; and we may rest assured that it was with great sorrow of heart that he ordered that Daniel be brought and be cast into the den of lions. One has thus commented on what would seem to be a weakness on the part of Darius in thus giving way to his counselors:

"Now we must not think that the conduct of Darius on this occasion exhibits to us a pattern of weakness; he did what often falls to the painful duty of many rulers when advised by their ministers, namely to see that the law of the State is carried out. He was far different from Herod who beheaded John the Baptist merely for the sake of keeping his own rash oath. There was a consistency about the conduct of Darius which deserves respect. A law, so long as it exists, must be carried out for the sake of preserving due order . . . among the subjects of the State; but whenever an open injustice is discovered in a particular law, it is not the duty of either rulers or citizens to violate the law, but rather procure the abrogation of it as speedily as possible. Such a course, however, was not open to Darius, as it was utterly opposed to the fundamental character of the Medes and Persians to alter the law. Accordingly nothing remained for the king but to see that this hastily made decree was rigidly enforced." And in accordance with this law Daniel was cast into the den of lions.

"This was supposed to be the end of the noble president -- sad end of a man so great, so faithful and so good! Those who hated him rejoiced over their murderous success, and now considered their fortunes made. But 'the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment.' God had not forsaken His servant, and a Higher than Darius had decreed that he should not thus perish before his enemies. Jehovah holdeth in His hand the devices of men and the savageness of beasts. He can bring to naught the machination of princes, and, shut the mouths of lions."

The wicked conspirators were so desirous and determined that their nefarious purpose should not be thwarted, that not only did they close up the entrance to the den with a great stone, but they, doubtless, persuaded the king to cause it to be sealed with his own signet as well as that of his lords, "in order that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel." It would *seem that* they feared if this extra security was not taken, the king might himself release him.

It is evident that the king had not given up all hope, for as Daniel was being cast into the den of lions, he said to him, "Thy God, whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee." These words show that the king

continued to have entire confidence in Daniel even up to the last. There is nothing strange in the fact that the king expressed himself as believing that the God of Daniel would deliver him, for it was a common belief among the heathen that their gods would interpose in behalf of the righteous, and particularly in behalf of their worshipers. "Darius, undoubtedly, in accordance with the prevailing belief, regarded the God whom Daniel worshiped as a god, though not as exclusively *the* true God. He had the same confidence in Him that he had in any god worshiped by foreigners-and probably regarded Him as the tutelary divinity of the land of Palestine, and the Hebrew people."

THE SLEEPLESS NIGHT

We next read that after closing the den "the king went to his palace and passed the night fasting." This evidently means that he went without his accustomed evening meal. Daniel was cast into the den soon after sunset, and it was the custom of those times to have the last meal after this time. There can be no question concerning the great sorrow and anxiety of the king. He may possibly have tried to console himself with the thought that he had done his duty. However, this would not mitigate his sorrow and regret at what seemed to be the fate of Daniel. There would continually arise in his mind the thought that he had done wrong -- that he ought to have broken and thus disannulled his own law to save his faithful officer. The sacred narrative informs us that he passed a sleepless night. Nothing could be done to turn his thoughts away from his faithful servant.

Meanwhile, Daniel passed the night alone among the lions. Alone, but not alone? The same Almighty One who had been with him all the many years he had sought to serve and honor Him, did not leave him now. His ever watchful eye sees all that occurs, and never does He leave His servants alone. We are not told how Daniel passed the night, but we may be sure that he who had learned to pray and to trust himself to the care of his God, did not fail to profit by that which he had learned.

At last the morning dawned, and the anxious, worn out, restless king arose *very early*, and went in haste to the den of lions. When he came to the den, "he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel . . . O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" Up from among the lions came the welcome words: "O king, live forever." It is utterly impossible to describe in words the feelings of the anxious king! What relief from the anxiety and remorse which he had been enduring! And what unbounded joy came to him as he heard the voice of his faithful officer: "My God hath sent His angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before Him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt."

The king's question was answered. Daniel's God had delivered him. And from the king's own words that are recorded in a decree which he issued afterwards, and which he sent forth to all the world, there can be no

question with regard to his belief that it was Daniel's God who had interposed and sent an angel to protect and deliver His faithful servant

DANIEL PRESERVED FOR FUTURE SERVICE

This was not the first time that Daniel had been ministered to by an angel. In the first and the third years of Belshazzar, in the wonderful visions of future events that passed before Daniel's view, angels appear, and one of them unfolds to him the meaning of the visions. Daniel does not inform us whether the angel was visible or not, but it seems quite reasonable to believe that the angel was seen by the Prophet. It would be in this way, as was evidently designed, that Daniel would more certainly know that his deliverance was accomplished by special Divine interposition. Not that God, if He chose to do so, could not have delivered His servant in other ways. It is very evident that Daniel believed that a miracle had been wrought; and there could have been no more fitting occasion for such a display of God's wonder-working power. The lesson that was very evidently designed to be impressed on the mind of the king, and through him on the minds of his subjects, was sufficient reason for a miracle to be wrought, and was worthy of Divine interposition. In a time when the world had so little knowledge or conception of the true and only God, when people generally -were given over to the worship of imaginary gods, this miracle was God's way of witnessing to them.

Daniel was the representative of the true God, and a member of that nation that had been given His laws. He had undoubtedly made known both by his words and life the great moral law of Jehovah God; and it seemed best to the Lord at this particular time, to preserve the life of His servant. His life work was not yet finished. Visions and revelations were to be given him concerning the future of the chosen people. He was to be further used to encourage and stir up his own nation to go up to the land of their fathers, rebuild their city and temple, and resume again the worship of Jehovah in the place appointed.

QUICK JUDGMENT ON DANIEL'S ACCUSERS

We read that "the king was exceedingly glad for him" -for Daniel. He evidently not only rejoiced because Daniel's life was saved, but also that he could now be restored to his place of usefulness in the kingdom. "So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God."

We next read that "the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and break all their bones in pieces, or ever they came at the bottom of the den." "Verily, the wicked shall fall into their own pit, but the upright shall have good things in possession. Haman hangs on the very gallows which his vaulting pride prepared for faithful Mordecai."

It is very evident that the king at last came to see the trap that was laid for Daniel; and indeed one that was laid for himself in the sense that it

brought him into a position where it was impossible for him to save his faithful minister, Daniel. It was but the work of a moment to rescue Daniel, and then to see justice measured out to the men who had been the instigators of this cruel plot. There is some ground for believing, according to Mr. Deane in his work, *Daniel; His Life and Times*, that "during the long discussion on the previous day, another compact had been made between Darius and the satraps, besides that to which we have already referred, that in case Daniel should come out unhurt, the accusers should forfeit their lives. Whether Daniel interceded for them, we are not told; but without delay all the accusers (not the hundred and twenty satraps and the two presidents, as some have imagined) and their wives and children were sent to experience the same fate that they designed for Daniel."

Josephus here introduces another, a singular feature to the narrative. He informs us that the accusers on hearing the sentence pronounced against themselves said to the king that the lions had been recently fed, and for this reason failed to devour Daniel. At these words the king ordered the lions to be well fed, and then cast the men into the den that he might see whether the lions when full would touch them or not. "And," Josephus says, "it appeared plain to Darius after the princes had been cast to the wild beasts, that it was God who preserved Daniel, for the lions spared none of them, but tore them in pieces as if they had been very hungry and wanted food."

Mr. Deane in commenting on these words of Josephus says: "This account is interesting chiefly from the manner in which it illustrates the tendency of a later age to *magnify* the miracles that occurred in the time of a past generation. The two miracles that occurred were Daniel's calmness, which converted the king, and Daniel's deliverance, which resulted in the name of the true God being proclaimed during the Persian Empire. But it seems as if Josephus invented a further- miracle merely for the sake of telling a humorous story. God does not work miracles lavishly. For those recorded in Scripture, we can trace a reason; for the Apocryphal miracles none at all. It is not for us to invent new miracles, but to adore with all reverence and love that wonderful hand 'which delivereth and rescueth, and worketh signs and wonders in heaven and earth, which hath delivered Daniel from the hand of the lions.'"--Dan. 6:27.

THE CHRISTIAN'S ARDUOUS TASK

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." -- Gal. 6:7

While it is true as respects all humanity that there is a general law in operation, the effect of which is that a sowing of thoughts, words, and deeds will ultimately bring a corresponding reaping of character and consequences, yet it is most manifest that the Apostle is particularly

addressing those who are especially enlightened and who have the opportunity of engaging in a sowing that the world does not have.

The world does not engage in the sowing and reaping that the Apostle speaks of; only the Church do so. The Church is composed of those who have heard the Voice of God offering forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ -- to all those who become his disciples -- offering also Divine assistance and begetting of the Holy Spirit to a new nature, and to glory, honor, and immortality. All who have really and truly become followers of Christ, who have taken up their cross and have covenanted self-denial in walking in the footsteps of the Master -- these alone are true Christians.

It is for these to order their steps in harmony with the Lord's leadings and to know that the results of their lives shall be in proportion as they follow their covenant of sacrifice and faithfulness as disciples of Jesus. These have covenanted to give up the world, its aims, its objects, its ambitions -- to sacrifice all these, that they may become "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ" Jesus their Lord in the heavenly inheritance. -- Rom. 8:17.

These should understand that it is not sufficient to agree to sow to the Spirit, but that the reaping of spiritual blessings and of heart development will depend upon their faithfulness in sowing to these ends. "He that soweth to the Spirit" -- he that lives a spiritual life, seeking to serve the will or Spirit of God in all of his thoughts, words, and deeds -- will reap the largest crop of spiritual development in the various qualities which go to make up the character-likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

On the other hand, those who sow to the flesh -- those who live after the flesh, seeking to please their own flesh, seeking to do according to their fleshly minds or wills, or seeking to please the fleshly minds or wills of their relatives -- these must expect that in their case the flesh thus cultivated will only grow the stronger in power to control their lives, and that they will make proportionately less progress along the lines of the Spirit.

In other words, the Apostle explains that every time we give heed to the fleshly inclinations of our fallen natures, we are hindering our own spiritual progress, and that the tendency of all such yielding to the flesh is toward corruption, toward death. On the other hand, to whatever extent we mortify the inclinations of the flesh, and seek to live in harmony with the Spirit of the Lord, in that same proportion we shall grow strong spiritually, and be prepared for the everlasting life on the spirit plane which God has promised to those who shall demonstrate their love for Him and their loyalty to the principles of righteousness.

This does not mean that only those who attain the complete mastery of the flesh will receive any blessing from the Lord, but that unless we manifest to the Lord an appreciation of the spiritual things, we shall not make progress therein, shall not be fit for everlasting life and shall not receive it; whereas, on the contrary, if our conduct shall manifest to the Lord our love for Truth and righteousness and our desire to please Him, however weak our flesh, He will account such worthy of everlasting life, knowing

that when they shall have the perfect bodies of the resurrection, they will be glad to live in absolute harmony with the Divine arrangements. Thus the Apostle on another occasion wrote, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us, who are walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." -- Rom. 8:4.

FAITHFUL CONTINUANCE IN WELL-DOING

In verses 9 and 10, the Apostle draws his argument to a conclusion. All who wish to do right--all who wish to live according to the lines marked out by the Holy Spirit through the words of Jesus and the Apostles--should not only start out well by making a full consecration, but should continue faithful, and not be weary of striving against sin and of being faithful to righteousness.

God is seeking to develop and to fix character in His people; and in due time, after they shall have suffered awhile, fought and battled for a time against the weaknesses of the flesh, they will reap the reward; they will get the new bodies that God has promised--the Resurrection bodies. Then their battling and trials will all be ended; for the new bodies will be in perfect accord with the new will, and there will be no cause of conflict between the two. The work of grace will then go grandly forward, through them, for the blessing of the world.

And, says the Apostle, let us not merely avoid harshness toward those who have been overtaken in a fault, let us not merely guard ourselves that we shall sow to the spirit and not to the flesh, and let us not merely avoid weariness in this good way, but let us additionally, "as we find opportunity, do good unto all men, especially to those who are of the household of faith." In so doing, we shall be copying our Heavenly Father's character. He is the Fountain of Blessing. From Him come the blessings of the present life--the sunshine and the rain--upon both the just and the unjust, upon the evil and the good.

As the Heavenly Father is continually giving blessings, rather than seeking favors, so we as His advanced and developed children are to seek to have the same character likeness, the same disposition, the same mind, namely a disposition to do good to everybody, but especially an earnest desire to do good unto all who are the Lord's children--unto all who are of the household of faith.

JESUS WAS THERE

Dear Brethren:

It is upon my heart to write you briefly regarding the fellowship we enjoyed recently in Atlantic City. The thought which comes first to mind is that Jesus was there.

The one-day Convention held in Atlantic City on September 9, 1923 is now in the past, and as in the case of other conventions, many of the details are gradually receding from our memory. Should every other

memory fade, though, none of the brethren privileged to assemble themselves together on that occasion would have difficulty in remembering that Jesus was indeed in our midst. With happy faces the redeemed of the Lord said so. (Psa. 107: 2.) Friends from New York, Philadelphia, Wilmington, Millville, and other places rejoiced together with the friends of the Home Class in Atlantic City and found fresh encouragement in noting the same spirit operating in each other's lives, as our Father brings "His workmanship" to a completion.

The necessity for patient continuance in well-doing seemed to be uppermost in the thought and expression of the friends during the Testimony Meeting, and all our minds were impressed with the importance of this element of character, without which, as the Apostle enjoins, our characters cannot be made complete.-Jas. 1: 4.

In one address from the platform we were reminded of the value of a clear knowledge of our gracious God, and of His glorious Plan, and of the arrangement whereby our Father permits the fragrant knowledge of Himself to be diffused by us. (2 Cor. 2: 14, Diaglott.) The love of God was the theme of another address, and for a season we listened to words which sought to stir us up to grasp a little more of the length and breadth and height and depth of the love of God, which passeth knowledge. In the closing discourse, the speaker brought to our attention the graciousness of our Lord Jesus in the case of the Apostle Peter. "Even when He chideth, tender is His tone." Our attention was also drawn to the reality of Peter's repentance, so completely manifested in his subsequent career; and to the comfort we too may derive from the knowledge that just as Jesus prayed for Peter that his faith should not fail, so now Jesus as our Advocate "ever liveth to make intercession for us."

May the spirit of God and of Jesus, which found opportunity to manifest itself in so many ways during this brief convention season now past, continue to possess us, and to sway our every thought in the days that may yet await us.

Your brother in Him

P.L.R.--N. Y.

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TRIALS ESSENTIAL TO CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

*"My brethren, count- it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations."--
James 1 :2.*

ALL those who have been called of the Lord during this Gospel Age are called with what the Apostle Paul styles the High Calling (Phil. 3: 14), the

Heavenly Calling (Heb. 3: 1), which is a call to share with Jesus in His glory, honor, and immortality. But the call is not the *decision* in the matter; it is merely an *invitation* with certain definite conditions. We are called, not only to righteousness, but to walk in the Master's footsteps of suffering and self-sacrifice. These are the only terms on which any are received as disciples of Christ. We understand the Scriptures to teach that during the Millennial Age there will be other terms of acceptance with God, offered the world. But there are no conditions offered now other than those of becoming followers and disciples of Jesus, to walk as He walked.

The Apostle James intimates that temptations may overtake these followers of Christ, into which they will fall as into a snare. As for an army, traps are set by the enemy, so the great Adversary sets traps and snares for us. He endeavors to misguide our minds and to lead us away from proper conceptions of truth and righteousness. We should be very careful to avoid his snares. Nevertheless, in spite of diligence, we may fall into a trap.

The Apostle says we are to rejoice when we fall into various temptations-not that we are to rejoice if we fall into *sin* when tempted, but that we may rejoice if we find ourselves suddenly precipitated into temptation. Temptation is not sin.' If we could but keep in mind the fact that every temptation, every trial, every persecution, every difficulty in life, permitted to come upon us who have made the covenant of sacrifice with the Lord, is intended to *prove its*, to test our love, to see whether or not our characters are *fixed*, rooted and grounded in righteousness and being built up in love, it would put all these trials, difficulties and temptations in a new light before us, and greatly assist us in fighting a good fight and overcoming. When we find ourselves suddenly in temptation, trial, we should say, If by these temptations, or trials, the Lord is proving my love and devotion to Him, then, how ever trifling they may be or however important, I will diligently use them as favorable opportunities to demonstrate to my Lord the fullness of my love and devotion to Him and His cause. I must fight a good fight against this thing-the world, the flesh or the Adversary -- whatever it might be that had brought the snare.

Thus viewed and thus met we can rejoice in every such experience; every trial and every difficulty will prove a blessing; for we shall, first of all, have an opportunity to show the Lord that we will endure, and not compromise His cause or our own position as His servants. We can rejoice also because we, know that under such trials our characters will make advancement toward crystallization, if we overcome; and because we know that the Lord would not let us fall into any temptation which He would not cause to work out for us a blessing if we are wholly loyal. Let us dwell often upon the words of the Apostles: "Beloved, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." "Greatly rejoice, though now for a season ye are in manifold temptation, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." "Blessed is the man that endureth [faithfully under] temptation;

for after his trials he will receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." "These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, *work* out for us a far more 'exceeding and eternal weight of glory" -- if rightly utilized; if, we are rightly exercised by them. -- Peter 1:7; James 1:2, 12.

"HE THAT ENDURETH"

We are assured that those who love the Lord, and who because of this will receive the Kingdom, will be those whose love will have been tested by trials and temptations on the way. Those who do not love the Lord with all their hearts--in whom self or some other idol has first place--will be seduced by the world, the flesh, or the Adversary, into some form of rebellion against the Divine Word or Divine providences. They will have schemes and theories which they will prefer to the Lord's Plan. These when analyzed will usually be found to be based either upon selfishness or upon ambition or an evil spirit of envy, hatred, etc. The Lord's leading and the Lord's words lose their attraction to such, and they lose their interest correspondingly. Like those who turned away from the Lord at the First Advent, declaring, "This is a hard saying," they walk no more with Him.

As there are some substances which are short and brittle, so are there some which have fiber, strength, endurance. The Lord chooses for Himself such characters as have the strong, enduring qualities--fortitude, patience, long-suffering, etc. Some there are who walk close to the Lord, who will not be driven from Him by any of the arts and wiles of the Adversary. They are such as are at heart fully the Lord's--not their own; they follow wherever the Lord may lead, because they have no will except the will of God. These will follow the Lord in the Narrow Way of trial, discipline and testings during the present life, and by and by, as He has declared, "They shall walk with Me in white; for they are worthy."--Rev. 3:4.

He who escapes all trials and temptations and difficulties has every reason to doubt that he is really in relationship to God as a son. If he were a son, the Lord would surely find it necessary to give him trials and difficulties. If he does not have these he should 'go to the Father and make sure that' there is no impediment on his part--make sure that he has put himself in the proper place, where he can be prepared for the Kingdom. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."--Heb. 12:6.

FAILURES AS "STEPPING-STONES"

All will rejoice when the testings are over and we are accepted as overcomers, to share with the Lord in His Throne. But patience, trust and love must first do a refining work in our hearts, making us mellow, submissive and obedient to God. Let the good work go on! Let us rejoice if our trials have made us stronger in character, more humble and Christlike, more aware of our blemishes and imperfections, more watchful and earnest in our endeavors to correct them so far as possible.

Even the conflicts in which we have had only partial victory may have resulted in blessings to us. Even in those experiences where we have suffered absolute failure, there may be, through the humiliation and the pain of de feat, a strengthening of our character, a firm determination for greater watchfulness in that direction, and a more fervent prayer for the Lord's sustaining grace, the need of which has been more deeply impressed upon our hearts. Thus even failures may become "stepping-stones" by which we rise toward God and Heaven. Only through much tribulation shall we enter the Kingdom of Heaven at all. if, therefore, the Lord's people find themselves involved in temptations, tribulations, instead of feeling downcast they are to rejoice and say, These are evidences that the Lord is preparing me for a place in the Kingdom. This should give one courage to fight the good fight against the world, the flesh and the Adversary. The flesh is suffering; but the new mind, the new will, has this joy; and the New Creature can rejoice, knowing that these trials are not for his harm, but for his good. -- 1 Peter 4:13.

A WAY OF ESCAPE PROVIDED

The Heavenly Father will with every temptation provide a way of escape. Hence when we find ourselves in difficulty we are to say, The Heavenly Father is permitting this trial-the Lord Jesus will help me, and so I will rejoice in the fact that the Lord will not allow me to be overthrown; for He has promised that all things shall work out for my good.

As our text expressly says: We are to count it all joy when we *fall* into temptations-not when we *walk* into them. We are not to seek temptation. In our own fallen condition and that of those around us, with the Adversary alert to harm us, we know that there will be plenty of temptations without our walking into them. But if we fall into temptation we are to say, I have been striving against this thing, but the Lord has permitted it; and there must, therefore, come some blessing out of it for me. Even temptations that come through negligence are not to be disesteemed. Some of our greatest lessons in *carefulness* have resulted from the effect of our own *carelessness*.

Our joy is largely dependent upon our study of the Word and our knowledge of the precious promises contained therein for those who overcome. The Lord wants those who will endure a great fight of afflictions, who will endure patiently, though the temptations continue long and the tribulations become more and more severe. Rut if they should lose faith, all their previous good resolutions and standing for what is right would not make them overcomers.

These trials are intended to develop in us patience that this quality may be deeply ingrained. We are building character for all eternity; and patience could not be thus developed and maintained except by repeated difficulties, tests--by our resolving again and again to be stronger and firmer in building the character-likeness of our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

A WORD OF WARNING

To those who are of this anointed, company and who are striving to attain the glory promised to the faithful followers of Christ, the Apostle Peter issues a word of warning. In the first chapter of his second Epistle, he urges the Church to add quality after quality of character-preparation, that thus they may be fitted for the glorious things that God has promised to the faithful. He specifies *faith* as the primary qualification. To this he says that we are to add fortitude, knowledge, patience, self-control, godliness, brotherly kindness and a broad, generous love for all mankind. The reason why the Scriptures declare that our judgment will be according to our *faith is* that while in the flesh we shall never be able to perform works such as God could approve.

What God approves is the New Creature. By exercising faith and by demonstrating loyalty these New Creatures will be able to please Him, and to work out the proper character as enjoined in His Word, developing the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit. "If *ye do these things*," says the Apostle, "ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."

Faith is necessary *all along the line*. Without faith we could not have courage to go on. If we did not have faith what would be our source of encouragement? The fall mentioned in the text above quoted (2 Peter 1:10), is evidently a fall from the position to which we have been invited and to which invitation we respond. We were called to be joint-heirs with our Lord. If we are obedient to the Word of the Lord and are properly exercised by the experiences which are given us in the School of Christ, we shall gain His approval; for "Faithful is He that hath called us," If there is a fall in our case, it will be due to failure to do our part. If we fail to cultivate character, we shall fail to gain the Kingdom.

CAUSES INDUCING A FALL

Among those who fall some will fall more seriously than others. Those who fail to go on will receive certain tests which will determine whether they will turn back to the world or will continue in the Narrow Way. Some will fail in that they will not manifest sufficient zeal. These will come through great tribulations. If by these experiences they are brought to a full loyalty to the Lord, they will be granted everlasting life, but not on so high a plane as if they had not failed in their manifestation of zeal for the Lord, and of faith, energy, and perseverance in doing the Lord's will.

Again, from lack of zeal in the Lord's service or from cultivating a spirit of bitterness, one may deteriorate until he becomes an enemy of the Lord, loving sin rather than righteousness.

Dear brethren, let us take heed to our ways. Let us earnestly cultivate the fruits of the Spirit, that we may indeed be presented "*faultless* before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."

ISRAEL IN THE MIDST OF THE NATIONS

*"Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."--Isa. 45: 22;
Josh. 1: 1-8.*

THE nation of Israel needed special encouragement as they were about to enter the promised land of Canaan notwithstanding the fact that they had been forty years in preparation for this very event; especially as they realized that they were confronted with problems, tests, and difficulties never before encountered. Indeed it was in Joshua's time that the Lord was accomplishing what later on He referred to by the mouth of Ezekiel: "Thus saith the Lord God; This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her."--Ezek. 5: 5.

The river Jordan was to be crossed, and at this particular time of the year it was swollen and large; the enemy, ready to repulse their advances, was keen and on the alert and better used to warfare than they. If they should, succeed in crossing the river in the face of their enemies it would appear to mean a great expenditure of energy and a great loss of life. They had no bridges nor pontoons from which to construct temporary bridges; and on the other side, if they ever reached it, they knew that the cities were strong walled, with a view to withstanding attacks and sieges, and they were comparatively unprepared as respects military equipment, battering rams, etc. What wonder if the people of Israel needed encouragement to undertake such a conflict-to take possession of the land which God had given them. The Lord began this work of encouragement by strengthening the heart of Joshua as the leader, by reminding him that He had promised the land, and assuring him that "every place that the sole of your foot shall tread, to you have I given it, as I spake unto Moses." Nevertheless this promise implied that nothing was theirs except as the soles of their feet claimed possession. It was theirs by faith in that promise--a faith that would lead to works. And is not this a general illustration of all of God's dealings with us of spiritual Israel? He gives to us better promises, exceeding great and precious promises, but they are ours only in proportion as we take them and appropriate them and act upon them, and through such exercise of faith and obedience gain the desired strength and blessing.

Next the Lord outlined the promised land (ver. 4), and practically gave the very boundaries which subsequently marked the possessions of Israel at the close of David's reign and throughout that of Solomon--from the Arabian wilderness on the South and Mount Lebanon to the river Euphrates on the north and the Mediterranean Sea on the west. This definiteness in statement of the boundaries would prove strengthening to faith, and would indicate to them clearly when they had attained possession of all that the Lord had given them. We may reasonably suppose that had their faith and courage been equal -to the task they would have been capable of taking possession of that land promptly, but as it was they took possession of only a portion, and the Amalekites and Canaanites still dwelt, with them in the land and subsequently gave them trouble.

ENEMIES TO BE FOUGHT AGAINST

Some have used this as an illustration of how the Christian's full consecration means the surrender of everything to the Lord, that His spirit and His will may have full control in our bodies and spirits, which are His. In proportion as we, have faith and avail ourselves of the Lord's assistance we may equally take possession of our mortal bodies, and transfer our talents to the service of the Lord and His cause; but if through fear or sympathy with sin we permit the will of the flesh to dominate us here and there in this, that or the other affair of life, we will always have trouble in proportion. The sins and weaknesses which we fail to fight against will be sure eventually to fight against us and to injure us as New Creatures. Hence our consecration and our faith should be so full and so strong that we would fight a good fight against sin and meanness in every avenue of our natures and in our sentiments, at last bringing every power of our natures into captivity to God. In proportion as this new mind fails to take possession of the mortal body and to rule it, in that proportion will we be weak when we should be strong, troubled when we should have peace, overcharged and ensnared when we should have the full smile of God's favor. Not that we are advocating the thought of it being possible to reach actual perfection in the flesh, but that, we do advocate as Scriptural the thought that we should have perfection of heart, of will, of intention, and that quite early, in our Christian experience, and that only such as attain this are overcomers and may expect joint-heirship with the Lord in the coming Kingdom.

God's encouragement of Joshua was not along the lines common amongst men. He did not say to him, "Remember your age and long experience and previous successes as a general," etc., but He did give to him the better counsel, the assurance that as he had stood by Moses as His servant so, He would be with him and would not forsake him and would not fail him in any hour of test and trouble. As a consequence of the Lord's assistance he, was assured that no one would be able to withstand him all the days of his life, nor would any Israelite be permitted to occupy his place as the captain of the hosts during his lifetime.

Was it not thus with our Lord Jesus, too? And is not the Lord's message a similar one to all the members of the Body of Christ--"I will be with thee. I will not fail thee nor forsake thee" ? In this let us rejoice while realizing that of ourselves we can do nothing. Remember the Master's words to the disciples returning joyful when they had been used in His service. When they recounted how in His name they had been able to heal the sick and even cast out devils the Lord said to them, Let not your rejoicing be on this account, but rather that your names are written in heaven--rejoice rather that your Father Himself loveth you, that you have been accepted of Him, and that He is on your part as you are enlisted in His service.

"BE STRONG AND OF GOOD COURAGE"

Attention has been called to the fact that the Hebrew 'word' here rendered strong is one which rather implies strength of the arms and of the shoulders, and thus gives the thought of aggressive warfare, while the word rendered courage has an association with the lower limbs and thus implies defensive or resistive power, steadfastness. So then the Lord exhorted Joshua to be strong, to have confidence, to lay hold upon the blessings he and the Israelites were commissioned to take and to possess; and He urged him to be of good courage, to be firm in the resistance of opposition and very steadfast in the face of difficulties. And, how much all the people of God today need to apply to themselves this same encouragement and to remember that Joshua and the Israelites and the promised land were merely foreshadowings of the greater and more wonderful antitypes. To us the Lord has given still greater blessings and promises. If the typical Joshua needed to be strong and firm, bold and courageous, what shall we say of the spiritual Israelites, who must not only wrestle against the world and the flesh, but also, as the Apostle says, must contend with wicked spirits in influential positions ?

How much strength and courage we must have if we would come off more than conquerors through Him who loved us and bought us ! And here is the point necessary to be remembered, that is that this is not our battle but the Lord's, that we are not fighting at our own charges but with His commission and with His promised assistance and support. "I will be with thee, I will not fail thee nor forsake thee." No wonder that the Apostle, gaining a clear view of this situation, exclaimed, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13.) And so it is with all the true followers of the Lord: we do not know how much we can accomplish, we do not know if there would be any limitations to our powers within the limits of the Lord's commands and while upheld by His promise. We must remember, however, the limitations, "Without Me ye can do nothing," and again, that what we are to do is clearly indicated in the Divine Word, and that we are not to look for nor expect Divine aid beyond those limitations: just as in the case of Joshua and natural Israel. Had they gone outside the boundaries of Canaan specified in the Lord's Word, they could not have expected the Divine assistance. Here again we remember the Master's words, "If ye abide in Me and My words abide in you" -- under these limitations we can do and be and pray anything and everything, but outside these limitations we must expect nothing.

Courage is always admirable, but there is a moral courage which should rank higher far than physical. This moral courage is greatly needed amongst the Lord's people; without it they can do nothing, and many of their difficulties in the Christian way are because they fail to appreciate this matter and fail to develop this courage. It requires real courage of the highest order to stand for the Lord's Truth and His people when these are misunderstood, misrepresented, antagonized. It takes real courage to stand for the light when the great Adversary with a world-wide influence brands it as darkness and leads an assault against it. It requires real courage to

denounce the darkness, meekly, persistently, when it has on its side wealth, culture, influence, and churchianity.

VERY COURAGEOUS TO OBSERVE THE LAW

There is a peculiar force in the language of the seventh verse of our lesson -- "Only be strong and very courageous to observe and to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded thee." Whatever of strength and courage may be implied in the sixth verse as necessary to the conquering of the land of promise, this seventh verse evidently refers to moral courage--strong and very courageous in obedience to the Divine commands. The injunction implied that Joshua would find obstacles and difficulties before him, and discouragements in respect to the observance of holy things. It is so with the spiritual Israelites, the Body of Christ today: while some are lacking in courage as respects the outward things, a still larger number lack these qualities in their own hearts, in their own lives. They see and to some extent appreciate the Divine will as being righteous altogether, but the self-denial necessary -to a full obedience they are not willing to render. Perhaps the greatest battles any of us have to fight are those of which none may know except ourselves--our mental battles. As a Methodist brother once put the matter, "My greatest' battle is to gain the consent of my, own will." However, no Christian should be in this attitude. This should be our first battle--to gain the consent and full co-operation of our wills with the Divine Word. Then let us go on to victory after victory, battling against the world, the flesh and the Adversary. Once our hearts are fully surrendered to His law it should never again be necessary to have a battle there; the victory should be so thorough, so complete, so far-reaching.

MEDITATING DAY AND NIGHT ON GOD'S LAW

The Lord explained to Joshua what would lie at the foundation of his success, and that neglect would mean his failure -- "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous and thou shalt make good success."--Ver. 8.

No clearer expression of the Divine will could be made to the antitypical Joshua and the members of His Body than is given in this Scripture. Its teaching is that there is no safety, no real success for those addressed, except in obedience to the Divine will, as recorded in the Divine Word. Thus also the Lord Jesus is represented as saying, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God; Thy Law is written in My heart"; and again prophetically-- "O, how I love Thy Law! It is My meditation all the day." (Psa. 40: 8; Jig: 97.) Meditation on the Divine Law day and night is not, of course, to be understood literally -- that we should do nothing else day or night than think upon the Scriptures. We are to understand the Lord to mean, that we should ever have in mind, in connection with all of our life's affairs, the thought that we are His, and that He is our guide and director in all things, and that the slightest matter that would pertain to our lives

and our interests , day or night, should be undertaken with due consideration of the Lord's will respecting the same.

In other words, as elsewhere expressed, whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do, we should do all to the Lord's glory; and this implies not merely a hap-hazard wish to do the Lord's will, but a studying of the Divine Word that we may know what that will is-not merely a studying of the creeds and traditions of the past, however we may honor those who made them and believe in their sincerity. It is for us rather to prove all things that we accept, and then to hold fast that which we have proved to be the good, the acceptable, the perfect will of God. As Joshua was told that his good success would be in proportion to his attention to the Divine Law, so spiritual Israelites similarly are informed that their success in making their calling and election sure will be proportionate to their, loving, zealous obedience to the Divine message. Meditating on the Lord's Law day and night implies a study of the Scriptures, a course which some of us at present are endeavoring to follow, using such helps as the Lord's providence has supplied to us-not relying upon any helps to the abandonment of the Word, but rather using these helps and proving everything received by the Divine standard.

"HAVE I NOT COMMANDED THEE?"

This question is asked by way of stimulating Joshua's thought-that he might realize that he had not commissioned himself nor been commissioned of man to undertake this great work. Similarly the Apostle points out that our Lord Jesus took not the honor upon Himself to be the High-Priest of our profession, but that He Was called of God to this position. Similarly, also, we who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus are to consider that we have not chosen Him but He has chosen us, commissioned us and authorized us, so that we can go forth in His name as ambassadors for Him and the Kingdom which He represents. What strength and courage this gives to the true soldiers of the cross-to realize that his labor is not in vain in the Lord. How it nerves him to be and to do in harmony with the Word and Spirit of his Master.

No wonder that these are in the Scriptures termed "more than conquerors." And no wonder, either, that the Lord has made the conditions of their present experiences such as to necessitate a good fight and a victory. He seeketh such, strong, courageous -- not in themselves, but in the power of His might and through faith. Such as persevere faithfully even unto death are termed the overcomers to whom it shall be given to sit with the Lord Jesus in His throne, the Millennial Throne, or Kingdom, where they shall reign with Him a thousand years -- the same Kingdom for which He taught His followers to pray, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven. This is undoubtedly the same Kingdom also spoken of by the ancient Prophets, as for example, the prophecy of Isaiah:

"It shall come to pass in the last days, that the -mountain [Kingdom] of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains [as a Kingdom overtopping or overruling all kingdoms], and shall be exalted

above the hills [the highest peaks]; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain [Kingdom] of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; *and He will teach us of His ways*, and we will walk in His paths. For out of Zion [the spiritual Kingdom -- the glorified Christ, head and body] shall go forth the Law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem [the seat of the earthly representative government in the hands of the 'princes']. And [previously -- in the great time of trouble] He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people. And [as a result of the Lord's rebukes and subsequently His Law and Word] they shall beat their swords. into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." -- Isa. 2: 2-4.

While this language was uttered in the Jewish Age, when, fleshly Israel would logically be regarded as the "mountain of the Lord's house," yet as we have seen the development of the Divine Program since, it now becomes manifest that Isaiah as a prophet was speaking especially of the spiritual house of -the Lord, chosen out of all nations in this Gospel Age, to be a peculiar people, a royal priesthood, an holy nation; to be the Bride and Joint-heir with God's dear Son to be associated with Him in the great work of human uplift and restitution of the Millennial Kingdom. A similar prophetic reference to this Kingdom of Christ is found in Isaiah 19: 12-25.

Let all those who are looking forward to membership in the greater Joshua, the antitype of Joshua of old, be very courageous, very prompt, very zealous, that we may be used and useful in the Master's service, both now and hereafter.

VALUE OF THE MORE SURE WORD OF PROPHECY

Dear Brethren:

It is good news to note in the September 15th issue of the HERALD that we may expect the first volume of the Revelation expositions within a month. The articles already presented in the HERALD have been of very valuable assistance to me in my study of that wonderful prophecy, and to have them in the form of a handy volume will be greatly appreciated.

A day or so ago I was looking over the first number of the first volume of *Zion's Watch Tower*, written July, 1879, and was much impressed with the thought there expressed *by* Brother Russell in his "Prospectus," as tinder the Lord's providence he launched the work that has meant so much to us all. His words of wise counsel came to me with much power, and confirmed me in my determination to give closer attention than ever before, 'not only to the comforting words of life, wisdom, admonition, exhortation, hope, etc., found in our -- Father's Word but also to this Word *of Prophecy*.

At this time, when the Revelation exposition is about to be released, and knowing how much you all esteem and value the thought of our late Pastor, I feel constrained to ask you to be good enough to let him speak again to the friends in the words he used forty-four years ago, as

follows:

"If God has given us a revelation, and tells us that *it is profitable* for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work, where do so many Christians who profess to accept that Word of God as their rule and guide, get liberty to ignore more than one-half of it, thereby virtually saying it is unprofitable? When God has given us 'a sure word of prophecy whereunto *-we do well to take heed,*' and when 'the Lord God of the holy Prophets sent His angel to *show* unto His servants the things which must shortly be done,' shall those servants feel under no obligation to seek to understand those heavenly messages ?

"Should they heed worldly men and a worldly church who deem it pious. and wise not to bother with these things, who would have us put them aside as empty fables and curious stories and strange imagery, which could only unsettle our minds, and interfere with Christian work; or shall we heed God who declares 'these sayings faithful and true,' and says: 'Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein'?

"Surely He knows what is best. calculated to inspire ,a *zeal* according to knowledge,' and what is necessary that we '*be not soon shaken in mind.*'"

Trusting you will think well of this suggestion, and with much Christian love from Sister Read- and myself, I remain

Yours in our Risen Lord,

P. L. Read.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JEREMIAH

SERIES III

MODERN CISTERNS THAT HOLD NO WATER

"They have hewn out cisterns that can hold no water."--Jer. 2 :13.

NOT only did Jeremiah's descriptions and arraignment of Israel in his day tell of their disobedience and apostasy and their lack of appreciation of the Divine blessings, that they had forsaken God, "the Fountain of living waters," but additionally the Prophet explained what the people were doing-what was engaging their attention -- "hewing out cisterns that can hold no water." Thus another figure is employed, and in vision we are carried away to view another scene, far from the verdant valley, far away from the refreshing, never-failing stream. There we see men and women and even children at work; and as we approach to discover what is

engaging so fully their attention, we hear the sound of the chisel, and lo! the people to whom was accorded the privilege of making use of the wonderful, life-giving stream, we find busily engaged in building cisterns to supply themselves and their homes with water!

Here they are laboring day after day in the scorching sun to obtain that which was so plentiful, so pure and refreshing. Not far away one has just completed his cistern and is waiting for the rain to come. At last comes the expected shower which he supposes is to repay him for all his arduous toil. The water flows in; but alas! it does not stay in. Through a crack or flaw, or perhaps because of the porousness of the soft rock, the water passes quickly out; or if the cistern is filled, the supply, poor though it is, is soon exhausted. With the utmost care in building, with the long days spent in toiling to supply himself with water, his labor comes to naught. "What an infinite mistake to miss the fountain freely flowing to quench the thirst, and hew out the broken cistern in which is disappointment and despair! Yet this, said the Prophet, was the precise position of Israel. They had done as no nation else, though searches were made from the far west of Chittim to the far east of Kedar [as Jeremiah in his first recorded discourse tells them]. (See Jer. 2:10,11.) The heathen, at least, were constant to their gods. False religions were indigenous to the lands where they had originated-the same idols worshiped, the same rites performed, the same temples filled with succeeding generations. But the people of Jehovah had forsaken Him as a maid might lay aside her ornaments, or a bride her attire [See Ver. 32] ; *and in resorting to false religions and heathen alliances they were hewing out for themselves cisterns which would fail them in their hour of need!*"

APOSTASIES IN SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

If the history of God's ancient people was not typical, we would most reasonably expect that history would repeat itself. They were, however, a typical people. There was a fleshly Israel who was greatly privileged above the surrounding nations, unto whom was committed the oracles of God -- "to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises." There is also a spiritual Israel that has had given to it vastly greater privileges and promises. Sad it is to say of both these classes, there has never been but a few who have failed to find or who have not forsaken the "fountain of living waters." The 'great masses of His professed people' of spiritual Israel have in these last days forsaken the fountain of truth, and hewed them out or engaged in hewing them out, cisterns broken cisterns that can hold no water-none of the pure water of truth.

There never was a time like the present, when there existed so many man-made cisterns, at which the professed people of God, the followers of Christ, are trying to satisfy their thirst. Leaving out altogether the great apostate system of Babylon, the Mother, and its unsatisfied votaries, and coming to those daughter systems that came into existence as a result of the failure of the great Reformation to go on in its work of restoring the true fountain of living waters, what do we find? We answer, we find the

larger numbers either engaged in building or gathering around these man-made cisterns, which when filled can never satisfy. The builders of these cisterns are expatiating on the virtue of the waters contained therein, and here professed followers of Christ are being invited to come and satisfy their thirst. Sad to say, many are heeding the invitations. What will they do in the end thereof?

We will not attempt to describe the manufactured cisterns of these last days; we will simply mention some by name. One of these was built in a time when the pure, primitive teachings of Christ and the Apostles and Prophets, were perverted and distorted-when the predicted falling away from the faith had fully set in. We mention it because so many of the professed people of God have supposed that it set forth the truth proceeding from the true Fountain; but experience and observation both teach that they do not satisfy. We know of no better name to give it than that of the "creed cistern." There are many of these. They profess to give the Truth as it comes from the true Fountain, but they do not. These cisterns still exist. Only a few, however, try to satisfy their thirst at these cisterns, in these enlightened times. Their waters have always been impure, but it is only of quite recent date that it is being realized how unsatisfying, yea, how foul, and distasteful they are. It is this that is causing many to turn away from the channel of truth, the Bible, supposing that these creeds are found there. Pastor Russell has well said:

"If we will imagine a mind (and they are legion) already disgusted with the din of the jarring and contradictory creeds of Christendom's sects,' numbering more than a hundred; and if, additionally, we will imagine that mind awakened, in part at least, to a realization of the injustice, unmercifulness, lovelessness, pitilessness, heartlessness, of the doctrine of eternal torment of all except a 'little flock' of 'saved' ones; and if we will remember that this awakened and disgusted mind has from infancy been taught that the Bible is the foundation for that slander upon the Divine Creator, then we can easily see that to such a mind the weight [of Higher Criticism so-called] would be immense. Such an one, is prepared and waiting for an excuse for utterly repudiating the Bible, and getting rid once and forever of harassing fears respecting the future of himself and millions of others, which as a nightmare had haunted his soul from infancy."

THE HIGHER CRITIC CISTERN

For such minds as thus described, the Adversary of man has -- prepared the cistern of Higher-Criticism, so called. He has used worldly wise men to build this cistern -- men who know nothing of the true teachings of the Scriptures, nor the power of its truths, the power of God therein revealed to deliver from sin. Most of these men were brought up under the influences of the perceptive teachings of the Bible, and as a rule are indebted to such an environment for what they are in morals, but they never came to realize their own unworthiness and need of a Savior, a Deliverer. They started with the object, as they declared, to purify the Bible; and in pursuing their studies they profess to have discovered that

there is no Divine truth in the Bible, and when people come to these man-made cisterns they are left to conjecture, anything they please about God, His character and plans. The following sums up briefly but correctly the very latest conclusions of the builders of the "Higher Critic cistern":

"It is occupied entirely with a minute and learned examination of the outside or shell of the Bible, upon the basis of -these external discoveries and deductions. The conclusion reached is that the Bible is not divinely -- that is, directly inspired; is not the authentic and eternal word of God; and, since no other book claims to be that, it follows that there is no such thing extant as a full Divine revelation There is nothing-absolutely nothing -- divinely authoritative upon which we can take our stand," say these Higher Critics.

They say, "The Bible is nothing more than an adventitious collocation of writings, composed by Hebrews of salient intellectual, moral, and emotional gifts, who lived some thousands of years ago. We are to take it for what it seems to us to be worth, and for nothing more." They affirm that "It is full of errors, chronological, geographical, scientific; it is full of fairy tales, lyrics, imaginative stuff of all kinds, which, however, possess the common peculiarity that they do contain constant references to the Hebrew Jehovah. If there do not live among us today poets, story-writers and 'prophets' just as remarkable as these old Hebrew ones, that is only because it happens so; and on the other hand, our historians and scientific writers are far more trustworthy.

"As regards the prophets," these Higher Critics tell us, "we are to understand that they are not prophets in the sense that they foretold things to come; if Isaiah or somebody else used a form of words which might be regarded as a foretelling of the coming of Christ, that is mere coincidence, nothing of the kind was in the prophet's thoughts. Upon the whole," they say, "were a number of devout, pure-minded, highly gifted men to get together today, they might turn out a very respectable Bible of their own, entitled to just as much respect as this ancient volume or library, which has been so painfully handed down to us from antiquity."

OTHERS WHO WOULD BUILD CISTERNS

Concerning the New Testament, one has thus summed up the latest conclusion of one of these cistern builders:

"Undoubtedly there was a moral. and religious teacher that came to be known as Christ. This teacher, who had devoted followers and disciples, was put to death in the reign of Tiberias, and after His death, Paul, the chief of His disciples, founded a new religion on His doctrines and precepts and on the belief in His resurrection."

It is the contention of the author referred to by the above writer that the original writings did not teach the miraculous conception of Jesus or His resurrection, but that these and other beliefs were gradually engrafted into other writings. The Gospels we have today, according to this "cistern builder" are spurious, and not to be relied on as histories.

Another man-made cistern is that of evolution, which, no matter how its builders analyze its waters, it destroys all faith in the Bible as a Divine revelation, leaving its votaries to boast of the great progress they have made over their ancestors, the monkeys, and the heights of greatness to which they expect to climb.

Then we have the cistern of Christian Science, falsely so-called, that so perverts or distorts the teaching of the Bible that the Word of God is made to mean anything and everything but that which is divinely intended.

However, while the 'great Adversary is moving these men to build these cisterns, the Almighty One is overruling it all to accomplish His purpose. Jeremiah's circumstances and surroundings, and the service he was called to perform, were among the important things that were fitting him for a service to his fellowmen in an Age beyond this. It is the same in the times in which we live. The Heavenly Kingdom class are being perfected through coming in contact with all these snares and pitfalls of the great Adversary. The times in which we live are the times foretold, in which the tares, counterfeit Christians, are being gathered into bundles -- into man-made organizations, preparatory to the symbolical burning -- to the renouncement of their false professions. It is the harvest-time foretold by Christ when the true wheat are being gathered one by one, unseen by mortal eye, into the Heavenly Garner above. The Adversary is being divinely permitted to do his work, which he thinks is thwarting the Divine plans. Those who understand God's plans, however, are enabled to see that all these things are, accomplishing only the Divine purpose.

A MARVELOUS OUTPOURING OF TRUTH

But this is not all. Another, a Very trying, a very searching work of God is now in progress. Blessed are those who can see this work going on, and can distinguish the voice of the Good Shepherd, as He speaks through His Word and providences in these days. A wonderful outpouring of truth has recently taken place. Clear light concerning the great Plan of God hidden to the wise and prudent but contained in the Bible, has been given. It has been found that this great Plan is -wise and just and good. Its various phases and features are now disclosed. Many have been saying, "O the blessedness" that has come into the life by this divinely given knowledge, This great outpouring of truth was divinely predicted. It was given for a special purpose. It was designed to save the honest-hearted among the followers of Christ, from the errors of these man-made cisterns -- false teachings, impure waters that have been rushing in like a flood. Those who have come to understand this wonderful Divine Plan, so long hidden between' the lids of the Holy Scriptures, are in possession of that which will save them from the erroneous teachings mentioned above. It has caused a deliverance of many from the man-made creeds; it has prevented Such from being led away by the false teachings contained in these "cisterns" of Higher Criticism, Evolution, and Christian Science.

But to use the language of God through the young Hebrew Prophet, "Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very

desolate saith the Lord. For My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." A great change, another great change is taking place. And this is among those who have seemingly been drinking at the pure Fountain of Truth. For a wise purpose the great Author of the Divine Plan permitted a mistake to be made in fixing an exact time for the end of the elective feature of the great Plan. It is producing a great testing; it is accomplishing another sifting. Satan is again permitted to work. This time it is among those who, professedly, at least, have been given an understanding of the great Divine Plan. If it were possible, even the *very* elect would be deceived. Other man-made cisterns are being hewed out; and the class being gathered are from among those who have been enlightened by the "present truth." To drink of these man-made cisterns, has the effect of building again what the Lord has broken down. Some are claiming that they are called to separate the Lord's people again into little sects. The door to the Heavenly Calling has closed forever, say some of these cistern builders. Come and drink at our cistern, is the cry of these. We can prove to you from certain narratives in the Old Testament that We are the people. We are "Gideon's band" -- "the three-hundred" class. Come with us, and we will show you some wonderful types that point to us and point to you also. We will show you that this man is pointed out in these types, and that man is referred to in this other narrative. If you remain where you are, if you do not see as we do, if you are unable to fathom these mysteries, say these cistern-builders, it proves that you are not of the *very* elect, the Elijah class. The "chariot" has gone through and separated us from you.

LET US LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Many voices are being heard in these days.' Many are being deceived. These have not learned to distinguish the voice of the Good Shepherd. -Through perhaps a defective consecration they are heeding the voice of strangers and fail to recognize the voice of the Owner of the sheep. Some are saying, To whom shall we go? Whom shall we believe? Which of the various sects or divisions is right? The true answer must be, None of them. The time has indeed come to turn and listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd. He is gathering His sheep unto Himself, and not into man-made systems, or sects. Hear His voice. Those who heed His voice are not looking around them, they are looking up. They realize that the one supreme thing now is to take on His character; to be meek and humble; to be submissive to Him; to be filled with His Spirit-the spirit of a sound mind., They do not despise knowledge, they hunger for it; but they desire it for the one purpose only, that they may be made like Him, that they may exemplify His character. These are united, and yet are not united. These know the Shepherd, and know and love His sheep when they meet them. They are separated by barriers which men have built, but are not affected by them. We see one here and one there in all the sects and divisions. They are known of the Lord and they know Him.

To these weary cistern builders, we would say in the expressive language of another: "At your feet O weary cistern hewer, the fountain of God's love is flowing through the channel of the Divine [Son of] Man! Stoop to drink it. We must descend to the level of the stream, if its waters are to flow over our parched lips to slack our thirst. You have already dropped your tools Forsake the alliances and idolatries, which have alienated you from your best Friend. Open your heart that He may create in you the fountain of living water, springing up into eternal life. It will then be that the words of the Christian poet will meet a responsive chord in our hearts, and we will be able to sing with the spirit and with the understanding also:

"I have come to the Fountain of Life,
A fountain that flows from above.
I have passed from the waters of strife,
And come to the Elim of love.
I have drunk of Samaria's well,
In the depths of my being it springs.
No mortal can *measure or* tell
The gladness the Comforter brings.

"I have come to the Fountain of Blood
That for guilt and uncleanness doth flow,
I have washed in its sin-cleansing flood,
And my garments are whiter than snow.
I count not my righteousness mine,
'Tis Jesus that lives in my soul:
I partake of His nature Divine,
And in Him, I am *perfectly whole*.

"I have come to the Fountain of Love,
He fills all the springs of my heart,
Enthroned all others above,
Our friendship no power can part;
And so long as the fountain is full,
The streams without measure must flow,
And the love that He pours in my soul
To others in blessing must flow.

"I have come to the Fountain of Joy,
His joy is the strength of my heart.
My delight is unmixed with alloy,
My sunshine can never depart;
The fig tree may wither and die,
Earth's pleasures and prospects decline,
But my fountain, can never run dry,
My portion, my joy is Divine.

"Oh, come to the Fountain of Life,
The fountain that never runs dry;
Oh, drink of its boundless supply;
For God is the Fountain of Life."

DANIEL THE BELOVED OF JEHOVAH

SERIES XII

TRIALS ASSOCIATED WITH SAINTSHIP

"He delivereth and rescueth, and He worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."--Dan. 6:27.

VERY many are the warnings and helpful lessons that may be learned from this sacred narrative of events occurring so long ago. We cite a few:

1. Godliness, uprightness, and virtue do not exempt one from earthly adversities and ills. Indeed it is frequently the case that the greater the saintship and fidelity to God, the greater the trials endured. "The tree that bears the best fruit is always the most assailed, shaken, and stoned." This was eminently true of the prophets of old. They were frequently exposed to persecution, were falsely accused, reviled and evil entreated. The greatest, the purest, the noblest Man that ever walked the earth, was defamed and accused, condemned and put to death. All such suffering for righteousness' sake and for truth's sake is not only helpful in building up a character fitted for eternity, but it assists the believer to an intimate knowledge of the true God in this evil world; when without such knowledge he would be disposed to forget Him altogether. We should not, therefore, think it strange when trials deep and long-enduring come upon us. Daniel was permitted by the wise Providence to be the target for conspiring foes, and to be so beset by them as to see no way of escape but that of a violent death.

2 We see the great value of an early Stand for God and truth. In the case of Daniel, in early youth he gave himself to God, and was very strict in obeying the voice of conscience as enlightened by the Divine Word. It is impossible to emphasize or magnify too greatly the value of an early rooting and grounding in the Word of God. One has said:

"This was the spring of Daniel's greatness. This was his shield and buckler in the midst of his adverse surroundings. This steadied him for one of the sublimest careers that ever was run by mortal man. Nor can a young man or woman possibly do a better 'or a wiser thing for the successful running of the race of life, wherever or whatever it may be, than to give the heart to God, to live and die cleaving always and above all to His Word and laws. This gives fixedness, shape, and purpose to the being. This fashions character into solidity, worth, and beauty. This supplies a base and groundwork on which to repose and compose one's self, whatever storms life may develop.

"In pursuance of his early principles, Daniel was very diligent in his devotions. He had his oratory for prayer, with its window ever looking to Jerusalem. He had no temple to which to betake himself, but he made a temple of his own house, and his upper room was his holy of holies. Three times a day he went into it with the incense of praise and prayer to the Lord God of his fathers. Not all the cares of state, nor all the subtle plottings and malignant watchings of his foes, could induce him to demit this constant habit of his life. He kept himself in communion with heavenly greatness, and it served to make him great and to fill him with the spirit of the holy Powers. The manner, form, or time of day in which he performed his devotions was not the material thing, but he kept open communications with heaven; and this was the secret of his strength and the nurturing force in all his great qualities. Nor can any man make of himself and of his life what he should without systematic earnestness in prayer."

THE GREAT LESSON OF SIMPLE TRUST

3. The great and crowning feature in Daniel was that he dared to take his stand with God -- dared at all times to obey Him rather than the decrees of men. He would not change or abate one jot or tittle of his religious devotions, even when he knew that he could save his life only by so doing, or could be delivered from death only by his God choosing to do so by a miracle wrought in his behalf. His enemies who watched and studied his life the closest, incited to do so with all the energy that hatred and malice could give, confessed that it was impossible to find in him, in his official duties to his king, any flaw. Indeed it was because of their belief in his steadfast devotion to his God that they discovered the one and only way to bring about his death. They knew with absolute certainty that Daniel would go on with his prayers as aforetime, even though he knew that it meant certain death. He went as aforetime to his upper chamber; and he did not take precautions to close the ever open window as he knelt down in reverence before his God.

We may believe with reason that on that day he told his God all about the decree, and with a conscience clear that he had done only his duty before Him, he committed the whole matter into the hands of Him who rules and controls the universe. It is most reasonable to believe that so great and simple was his faith and trust, that when he arose from his knees he went about his duties as calmly and with the same self-possession as if the decree had never been made.

Here in this man do we have illustrated the pattern for a truly successful life, as well as the proper way to meet death. There was no spirit of bravado or defiance in this godly man. There was no posing ostentatiously for the applause of the lookers-on. We see in this incident not the slightest indication on his part to pose as a martyr. "But here was the dignity of a meek and honest faith, living only for God, and made up to die, if it must be, just as the life was shaped, unruffled with regrets or fears, and peaceful in the keeping of a faithful God."

An interesting and very important question is suggested by this deliverance of Daniel. by Divine interposition. The question is, To what extent and in what forms may the Lord's people in these days look for and expect Divine interposition when in trouble, trial, or danger. Of one thing there can be no doubt-the true children. of God may confidently look for Divine help, even Divine interposition in their behalf in such times. Many are the Scriptures that plainly declare this.--Psa. 37:23-40; 91:17, 19; 55:22; Matt. 6:25-32; 10:25-31; Phil. 4:6, 7; 2 Pet. 5:7.

ADVANTAGES OF A CHRISTIAN LIFE

There are many advantages that the Christian has because of his faith that the larger number of humanity do not enjoy. A course of life that is always associated with the Christian's walk in this world, makes it quite certain that he escape many of the evils that afflict mankind. A simple abstinence from intoxicating drinks, enables a man to escape the evils that afflict the drunkard. How much' of poverty, disease, disgrace, wretchedness, and ruin of body and of soul is caused by the evil of the liquor habit cannot be estimated. By a chaste, pure life, a man certainly avoids all those painful and loathsome diseases that afflict humanity. By a course of honesty, integrity a man will avoid imprisonment for crime, and the disgrace that is associated with it. Albert Barnes in expatiating on this subject has said: "By religion -- pure religion -- by the calmness of mind which it produces; the confidence in God; the cheerful submission to His will; the contentment which it causes, and the hopes of a better world which it inspires, a man will certainly avoid a large class of evils which unsettle the mind, and Which fill with wretched victims, the asylum for the insane. Let a man take up the report of an insane asylum, and ask what proportion of its inmates would have been saved from so fearful a malady by true religion-by the calmness which it produces' in trouble; by its influence in moderating the passions and restraining the desires; by the acquiescence in the will of God, which it produces, and he will be surprised at the number which would have been saved from the dreadful evils of insanity." The writer gives a report which enumerates the evils that led to the incarceration of 501 persons in a Pennsylvania hospital for the insane. This report was given over a century ago. The percentage of increase since that time is enormous. The report follows:

- Intemperance 95
- Loss of property 72
- Dread of poverty 2
- Intense study 19
- Domestic afflictions 48
- Grief for the loss of friends 77
- Intense application to business 13
- Religious Excitement 61
- Want of Employment 24
- Mortified Pride 3
- Use of Opium And Tobacco 10
- Mental Anxiety 77

GOD STILL CARES FOR HIS OWN

However, in regard to the nature and extent of Divine interposition in behalf of the Lord's true children, it is necessary to keep in mind that the Lord is overruling in all the affairs of those who truly commit themselves to Him. He never leaves His children alone. No matter what may be the situation in which they may find themselves -- whether in prosperity or adversity; in times of safety or in times of danger; in prison or out of prison; bound to the stake with the fires kindled about them, or delivered from such experience; cast among the savage beasts, and delivered, or tortured and devoured by the same--He is with His children, He will never leave them nor forsake them.

The three Hebrew worthies were not sure how their deliverance was to come. They said, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Daniel said nothing that would indicate that he expected anything else but death. We do know that he had committed himself to the Divine care. It seems evident that in those Old Testament days the Lord's people committed the keeping of their souls unto God, leaving it to His wisdom as to whether a miracle should be wrought in their deliverance, or whether it would be His will that they suffer death. The same is true in the days of martyrdom. Old, middle-aged, and young men, as well as young and tender women, went to their death, having left their cases in the hands of God to do with them as it seemed best to Him. His presence was with them, whether burning at the stake or being gored by wild beasts. They realized His presence, and in many instances so great was their joy in being permitted to suffer for His name, that they seemed to lose all consciousness of pain from the burning flame or from the terrible wounds inflicted by the wild beasts.

MIRACLES FULFILL DIVINE PURPOSE

Whenever miracles have been wrought in the deliverance of God's people there has always been a Divine purpose to be accomplished. That purpose when discovered is found to be for the furtherance of His Cause in the world, and not for the special benefit of the delivered one. God could just as easily have saved the three Hebrew worthies from death without a miracle as He could have with one. Daniel could just as easily have been saved from being cast into the lions' den, as he could have been delivered by the performance of a miracle after he was cast in among the lions. We conclude then that God's children are not to expect Divine interposition by miracles. Miracles have characterized the beginning of the different dispensations in connection with the unfolding of God's Plan. They were designed to give evidence to others that He was giving messages of importance concerning His purposes in redemption.

We would think it a mistake to say that in certain exceptional cases down through this Age there have not been miracles performed; though these have been of rare occurrence. "There are cases where God seems to

interpose in behalf of the righteous directly, in answer to prayer, in times of sickness, poverty, and danger-raising them up from the borders of the grave; providing for their wants in a manner which appears to be as providential as when the ravens fed Elijah, in rescuing them. from danger. There are numerous such cases which cannot be well accounted for on any other supposition than that God does directly interpose in their behalf, and show. them these mercies because they are His friends. . . . The purpose to do this was a part of the original plan when the world was made, and the prayer and the interposition are only the fulfilling of the eternal decree."

The advantages of leading a righteous life pleasing to God in the present life are many. God interposes in behalf of His trusting children, in giving them assistance, support and consolation, enabling them to bear the inevitable ills of the present life. He sustains His children in the hour of trial and adversity; He upholds them in bereavement and sorrow; and He supports them in the hour of death. There is a degree of peace and comfort that is given to trusting Christians because of their understanding the Divine Plan, and because of their realization that they are now in the school of trial -- a school presided over by the infinite One, who will not suffer His pupils to suffer or to be tempted beyond what is necessary or beyond their strength to endure.

THE MINISTRY OF THE ANCIENT PROPHETS

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." -- Isa. 60: 1-3.

IN their study of the Old Testament many have construed the messages of the Prophets to Israel to signify that God called that people to be a missionary nation among the other peoples of 'the earth; and that during all that long period from the commencement of His dealings with the Israelites in Egypt to the Advent of the Redeemer, God was trying to evangelize the other nations, to transform them, to convert them from idolatry to the worship of the true God, and thus get them in a state of salvation.

That this was not the Divine purpose during the Jewish Age, however, is most evident upon more careful examination of all the facts. There was really no Gospel of salvation preached, nor any particular message given to the other nations of the earth during that long period, inasmuch as there was really no Gospel to preach -- no Savior, no Redeemer in evidence. More than this, there was really no effort on the part of Israel to stem the tide of idolatry and wickedness amongst the surrounding nations during that Age. God had said to, Israel, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth," which meant that they were the only nation that He would recognize or that He was dealing with in any way. He selected this one nation and dealt with them, as pointed out in the New Testament,

particularly in the Book of Hebrews, to bring out certain lessons that would be of value and importance to the Church and to all nations in due time. He used that nation to portray certain dealings and to picture forth one feature or another of His great Plan which is so comprehensive as to contain a full, fair opportunity to gain everlasting life on the part of every member of our race, in the divinely appointed season. Thus it is only as we lift our mental vision and discern the prophetic character of the messages of the Prophets that we come to appreciate their fuller meaning and application to the New Dispensation, and to a world-wide missionary work that will be inaugurated on a grand and glorious scale in behalf of all humanity.

OUR LORD THE LIGHT AND GLORY OF ISRAEL

The message of Isaiah quoted above we apply from this standpoint. We believe the words of this prophecy have a double application—first to spiritual Israel, and second to Israel after the flesh. The great and long-looked-for light is the Lord Jesus Christ, the light of the world; and the time indicated is the end or harvest of the Gospel Age, when He comes in glory and power to shine as the sun in His Kingdom. That the prophecy had a partial fulfillment to fleshly Israel at our Lord's First Advent is true. He indeed was the light and glory of Israel; but as a nation they knew not the time of their visitation (Luke 19:44); the light shined in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. (John 1:5.) Consequently the glory of the Lord was not then seen upon Israel; they did not know their King, nor enter with Him into His Kingdom, though the privilege was then offered to them. They did not arise and shine, and therefore darkness came upon them; and, as a nation, blinded to their highest interests, they stumbled into the ditch (Matt. 15:14), a great time of trouble, which, beginning with the destruction of their holy city and the complete wreck of their national polity, drove them out of their own land and left them as fugitives in every land and the subjects of more or less persecution even unto the present day.

All this reminds us very forcibly of the words of Jesus to them -- "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." (John 12: 35, 36.) But alas! Israel heeded not the light, nor the warning. It was as the Prophet had foretold (Isa. 1: 3), "Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider." However, Behold (says Paul) the goodness as well as the severity of God: on them which fell from their high privileges, severity; but upon you Gentiles, goodness, if you heed and continue to walk in the light, but, if like them you become proud and self-righteous, you also will be cut off from the Divine favor and left to stumble in darkness. -- Rom. 11:22.

A GLAD MESSAGE TO ALL FAITHFUL SAINTS

Indeed, that such would be the case with the masses of nominal spiritual Israel in the end of the Gospel Age, as well as with fleshly Israel in the end of the Jewish Age, was also foretold by the Prophet, who said, "And He shall be for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence, to *both* the houses of Israel." (Isa. 8:14.) Again, in the end of this Gospel Age, the Lord of the whole earth comes forth. He comes not for a sin-offering, as at the First Advent, but He comes now in the plenitude of His kingly power to begin His glorious reign and to exalt His faithful Church as His Bride and joint-heir to His throne and His glory. He comes while yet darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people, and the glad message to all His faithful saints is, "Arise, shine! for thy light is come." "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Observe that the Prophet calls upon the saints to shine now, and also tells of a glory about to be revealed in them. The thought of the passage is plainly that they have something to do with the shining to which they are exhorted, while the glory to be put upon them is apart from their own doing, a reward from God to the faithful ones who now diligently let their light shine for Him.

Jesus said to His disciples in the beginning of the Age, "Ye are the light of the world"; and so the true followers of Christ all through the Age who have been with Jesus and learned of Him have been the lights of the world. (Matt. 5:14-16.) But this prophecy, taking the standpoint of the end of the Age, indicates that greater light is due here than at any previous time. And so we find it. Although the Lord has been enlightening and leading His people ever since the days of His First Advent, yet now they are to arise and shine as never before. Within these days of the Lord's presence (since 1874) the light of Divine truth has been shining more brightly than ever, so that His people have been able to discover and understand God's deep designs, and to see in His mighty work a grand and benevolent plan of ages, fully worthy of the wisdom, power, justice, and love of our God to use another figure, the table of the Lord has been richly spread with all the bounties of the harvest season, and the Lord Himself, according to His promise, is serving. "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching: verily, I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself and make them to sit down to meat and will come forth and serve them."--Luke 12:37.

THE GLORY OF THE LORD RISEN UPON US

Well may the Church arise now and put on her beautiful garments; for very shortly she is to receive beauty for ashes and the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness. The time is come when she may lift up her head and rejoice, knowing that her deliverance draweth nigh. (Luke 21: 28.) The exhortation to arise and Shine is therefore to all who have been enlightened by the Message in these days of the Lord's presence. The Prophet tells us that this truth which so fills our hearts with joy and gladness is nothing less than the glory of the Lord which is risen upon us.

How blessed the thought, how precious the truth! The humblest saint who has been brought to a knowledge of it, and who has been thrilled with its blessed inspiration, may rejoice in the realization that the glory of the Lord has already risen upon Him.

Is it indeed true that the 'glory of the Lord' is risen upon this humble one who has to fight hard the fight of faith day by day to keep his mortal body in subjection to the mind of the spirit, and who realizes every moment that he stands only in the imputed righteousness of Christ, his own being but as filthy rags? Yes, it is even so; and the fact that the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee, that it has thrilled thy soul with a joy unspeakable and full of glory even now, is a special evidence of His love and care for thee. And more, it is an earnest or foretaste of that fullness of glory and blessing promised a little further on, if we are faithful to the light we now enjoy; if, with a holy zeal for God, we arise and let it shine-in our words, in our works, and in our characters.

A few more days or years of cross-bearing and trial, a few more days of valiant and persistent warfare with the principalities and powers of darkness that conspire against, us to bring us again into bondage to sin, a few more opportunities to tell the blessed tidings to those who Sit in darkness, to hear our loving testimony to the power and grace of our God, and then, by and by, we shall shine in the glory of the Kingdom for the blessing of all the world--"His glory *shall be seen* upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Let us therefore be faithful to the light; let us walk in the light while we have the light; for if We prove unfaithful to it, it will be withdrawn from us. If, after receiving it and being blessed by it, we fail to appreciate it, and seek for the satisfying portion elsewhere, thus plainly indicating our lack of appreciation, it will not continue with us.

ONLY A REMNANT OF BOTH HOUSES

While this blessed message comes to all the professed people of God with this stirring appeal, "Arise, shine!" it comes also with an inherent power to separate between the true and the false, the faithful and the unfaithful. Like a magnet, it attracts only its own kind. The spirit of God which is in the truth must also be in every one who receives it: all such, and only such, have an affinity for it and can be attracted by it; and the more they are filled with the spirit of God, the more they will prize the treasure of Divine wisdom and cling fast to it, notwithstanding the opposition that may be brought against them. Those who have less of the Lord's spirit may not hold to it so tightly, and unless they become filled, sooner or later, they will be overcome by opposition, either open or subtle, and will be swept away. There must be a very strong and close affinity for the magnet of truth to hold fast to it against all opposition. Those in whom the spirit of the world dwells, whether they be professed Christians or not, have no affinity for it, and are not drawn by it. It is no matter of surprise, therefore, that we find the large majority of professed Christians, who are really worldings, either indifferent or in opposition to the truth; for the nominal spiritual Israel, like fleshly Israel, is to stumble at this stumbling

stone, and only the *remnant* of both houses shall be counted Worthy of the Kingdom and its glory. Now, as in the 'end of the Jewish Age, the masses of the professed people of God are blinded and stumbled because their hearts are not in the proper attitude to receive the blessings 'God has to bestow.

Another thought is prominent in this glowing prophecy and this cheering, exhortation to arise and shine. The words remind us of our Lord's counsel to Mary, immediately after His resurrection. Overcome with joy she was inclined to linger in His presence; but gently He reminded her that the good news of His resurrection would be equally good to all the other disciples, and that it was her privilege to bear it to them. The time for His ascension to the Father was not yet, and He would meet with them all again. -- John 20: 17.

So now, while we are made to realize and to rejoice in the presence of our Lord , the Prophet bids us be mindful of our brethren to whom this joy has not yet come, and to whom it is our privilege to bear these good tidings. All who are truly the Lord's faithful covenant people will recognize the glory of this Harvest Message; they will be attracted by it and rejoice in it. But since we cannot always discern the hearts, to know who are the worthy ones, we must expect the repulses of many whose hearts are not yet in condition to receive it. Nevertheless, let us arise and shine. Let us bear the blessed testimony wherever we have opportunity, especially to them who are of the household of faith.

THY KINGDOM COME

After spiritual Zion has been glorified with Christ to shine as the sun in the Kingdom (Matt. 13:43) and that true light shines upon the nations, it will be first upon the house of Jacob-the return to them of Divine favor, "mercy through your mercy" (Rom. 11:26-30; then this call will come also to them, "Arise shine, thy light is come!"

The Prophet Micah spoke most eloquently and forcefully of the times and seasons just subsequent to the glorification of the Kingdom Class and the establishment of the new government on the earth. (Micah 4:1-4.) He portrays the great transformation that will take place, the marvelous change in the social order amongst men, the judgment work that will progress, amongst the peoples of the earth, and the ultimate conversion of humanity to the laws and regulations of the Kingdom of God.

Many are the descriptions given to the effect that "the inauguration of that Kingdom will be accompanied with such awe-inspiring scenes as will cause the whole world to tremble with fear, and to gladly recognize the Anointed of the Lord as King of the whole earth. As Israel en treated that the Lord would not speak to them any more -- by the terrible sights and sounds witnessed at Sinai so here, all peoples will desire to have the Lord Jehovah cease speaking to them in His wrath, and vexing them in His hot and just displeasure, and will be glad to hear instead the great Mediator, to recognize Him as the King whom Jehovah sets over them --- Immanuel;

the great anti type of Moses-the veiled (hidden) Prophet, Priest and King.
-- Compare Heb. 12:19 and Psa. 2:5, 6.

"Israel shall be willing, anxious for the new Kingdom; as it is written, 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power.' (Psa. -110: 3.) It will be just what Israel has waited for (blinded to the higher spiritual call of the Gospel Age), only it will be much grander and more enduring than any thing they ever conceived of. Then a vast number of sadly misinformed partial believers in Christ will say, 'Have we not prophesied [preached] in Thy name, and in Thy name done many wonderful works?' (Matt. 7:21, 22.) These will not be recognized as the- Bride of Christ, but will be left to have part in the wailing and gnashing of teeth of the great time of trouble, and will doubtless become God's people instead of sectarians, and will be 'willing in the day of His power.' And indeed, very shortly, as our text declares, God's Kingdom will be recognized as 'the desire of all peoples.'

MORAL AND SOCIAL REFORMS

"The Law of the Lord which will then go forth from Mount Zion, the Kingdom, and he promulgated to all the people from Jerusalem, the world's New Capital, as the Word of the Lord by His 'princes,' will at once take hold of what are already recognized as 'crying evils.' Moral reforms will be instituted along all lines; financial, social, and religious questions will all be recast in harmony with both justice and Love. judgment will be laid to the line, and' righteousness to the plummet (Isa. 28:17); all of earth's affairs will be squared and plumbed with righteousness-and will be brought into strict conformity thereto.

"How much this will signify as regards the suppression of all lines of business which tempt humanity by alluring and seducing through the weaknesses of their fallen natures and the unbalance of mental and moral qualities! . . . All time-killing and character-depraving businesses will be stopped; and their servants will be given something to do that will be beneficial to themselves and others.

"Similarly, the building of war-vessels, the manufacture of munitions of war and defense will cease, and armies will be disbanded. The new Kingdom will have no need of these, but will have abundant power to execute summary justice in the punishment of evil doers, when they have determined to act, but before they have done injury to others-for none shall injure or destroy in all the holy Kingdom (Isa. 11:9) except as the competent and righteous judges shall cause the Second death to come upon the incorrigible.--Isa. 32:1-8; 65:20-25; Psa. 149:9; I Cor. 6:2.

"The banking and brokerage business, and other like employments, very useful under present conditions, will no longer have a place; for under the new conditions the human race will be required to treat each other as members of one family, and private capital and money to loan and to be needed will be things of the past. Landlords and renting agencies will find new employments also, because the new King will not recognize as valid patents and deeds now 'on record. He will declare that when at Calvary He purchased Adam and His race, He *purchased* also Adam's dominion, the

earth (Eph. 1:14): and He' will apportion it, not to the selfish, avaricious and grasping merely, but its fattest places will be given to 'the meek,' according to His promise in the sermon on the mount. -- Matt. 5:5.

THE GREAT LEVELING PROCESS

"It is of this great King and judge (Head and Body), typified by Moses, that the Lord declares:

"The spirit of the Lord shall be upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and of might, the spirit of knowledge and of reverence for Jehovah. And He shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of Jehovah: and He shall not judge according to the sight of His eyes, neither reprove according to the hearing of His ears: but with absolute correctness shall He judge the poor and remonstrate with equity for the meek of the earth: and He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His, lips shall He slay the wicked. Righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, faithfulness the girdle of His reins.'--Isa. 11:1-5.

"To some it might appear that this Divine program will make the earth a paradise for the poor, but a place of anguish to those now accustomed to luxury and to having an advantage over the majority, either because of good fortune or superior talents and opportunities, or by dishonest practices. But such should remember the words of the judge, uttered eighteen centuries ago: 'Woe unto you that are rich! for ye have your consolation. Woe unto you that are full [satisfied] for ye shall hunger [be dissatisfied]." (Luke 6:24, 25.) At first these will be disposed to lament the loss of their advantages, and as now the godly rich find it difficult to enter into the condition of heart and life which will be rewarded with a share in Christ's Kingdom, so then, those previously accustomed to riches will find difficulties not experienced by those previously disciplined in the school of adversity.

"But the inevitable leveling of society which will be accomplished by the anarchy of the Day of Vengeance must be accepted; and by and by (slowly in some, more quickly in others) the advantages of the reign of Love will be recognized and generally appreciated. It will be found that under the Divine arrangement all may, if they will, be blessed, be truly happy, and go 'up' on the highway of holiness to grand human perfection (God's image), and to everlasting life. (Isa. 35:8.) What already is generally conceded, will be found absolutely correct, namely that with present conveniences, if the whole people were put to work systematically and wisely, not more than three hours labor for each individual would be necessary. And under the guidance of the Heavenly Kingdom the hours of release from toil will not work either moral or physical injury, as they would surely do under present conditions, with evil and temptation on every hand, to take advantage of inherited weaknesses.

**EARTH'S NEW KING LOVED US
AND BOUGHT US WITH HIS BLOOD**

"On the contrary, when Satan is bound (evil restrained), and outward temptations removed, the hours of release will be spent, under the guidance of the glorified Church,, in studies which will become more and more attractive and interesting; studies of Nature and of Nature's God. and of His glorious attributes-His Wisdom, justice, Love, and Power. And thus, pleasurably, they may progress toward human perfection-the end of their race or trial; for, be it remembered, the new government will not only take cognizance of the great affairs and interests of its subjects, but also of its smallest affairs. It will be a 'paternal government' in the fullest sense of that term.

"It might well be with serious apprehension that men would contemplate the establishment of the most autocratic government the world has ever known, in which the lives, property and every interest of all mankind will rest absolutely in the hands of the King, without appeal, were it not that we have the most absolute and convincing proofs that every regulation and arrangement of the Kingdom is designed for the benefit of its subjects. The King of that Mediatorial Kingdom so loved those over whom He is to reign that He gave His own life as their ransom price, to secure for them the right of an individual trial for everlasting life; and the very object of His Millennial reign is to assist them in that trial. What more could be asked? As the Redeemer, He has justly the right to control absolutely that which He purchased with His own blood; and all appreciating such love as He has manifested would if the question were left to their vote-which, however, it will not be, gladly accord to Him all power and authority and promptly yield to His righteous will.

"But the 'saints' who shall be joint-heirs in the Kingdom, and associate judges -- Can they be safely trusted with absolute, autocratic power?

"Ah Yes! as Christ Jesus proved that He had the Heavenly Father's spirit, and is 'the express image of the Father's person,' so. all who will be. of that 'little flock,' His joint-heirs in the Kingdom, will have been proved to have 'the spirit of Christ' -- the Holy Spirit of Love. It is one of the terms of their 'call,' that they should become 'copies of God's dear Son,' and, none others will be accepted as having made their calling and election sure. Indeed, it is in order that they may be able to sympathize with those who will then be under their care and instruction, that these are being selected from among the weak and imperfect, and being taught what it is to fight a good fight for right and truth against error and sin. Yes, the under priests, as well as the Chief Priest, of the Royal Priesthood can be, trusted without a fear. God will entrust the power to these and this is the best of guarantee that it will be used justly, wisely, lovingly, for the blessing of the world."

"SEATED TOGETHER IN HEAVENLY PLACES"

Children of the Heavenly King
As we journey let us sing."

How beautifully the poet has expressed the earnest longings and desires of the hearts of all those who are journeying toward the Heavenly Canaan. The people of God above all others upon the earth are indeed a joyful people; not because there is nothing to make them sad; not that they have no trials; and not that their way is an easy one; for to the contrary it is a most difficult way, the way of the cross, with many besetments, trials, and reverses. But these who "rejoice always" and sing throughout their earthly pilgrimage are such as have been brought nigh to God and have caught a glimpse of His most excellent glory as represented in His Word and works, and in His eternal purpose.

Brethren in the Lord who assembled at the Convention at Ulster Park, N.Y., October 6 and 7 gave evidence that they were rejoicing Christians, and that they partook of the joys of a spiritual life, and during that season of fellowship were made to realize that they were seated at the Lord's table and supping with Him as He has given promise.

The place of this Convention was truly unique -- a most desirable location to "come apart and rest awhile"; it was a quiet, restful place, far away in the hills and by the side of the waters, surrounded by the wild forests, the beautiful foliage of many colors of which constituted a grand picture and added much to the charm-and attraction of the place. All the surroundings of this beautiful scene seemed to speak to us indeed of the presence and glory of God. Surely none could say otherwise than that it was good to be there.

The number in attendance was upwards of sixty brethren, who represented quite a wide area of country in the surrounding states. It was gratifying to see this number gathered at this place at this time of the year; but it certainly gave evidence of earnest longings on the part of the brethren to participate in a conference of earnest Bible students who realized that the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.

All the friends were royally entertained in the large spacious home of our dear Brother, and Sister Greiner, otherwise designated as "The Golden Rule Inn." It was indeed a real family gathering and reunion. There we dined and partook together of the many good things that were spread before us on both the natural as well as the spiritual table-the majority of the meetings being held in this home also. The visiting brethren truly felt a debt of genuine gratitude toward our dear Brother and Sister for their very warm hospitality and loving thoughtfulness by which all were made most comfortable. May the dear Lord encourage their hearts and reward them abundantly for their work and labor of love.

Again as the brethren sat at the Lord's table they were made to feel much encouragement from the various messages of the brethren who broke the bread of life. As each speaker in his own characteristic way dealt with the Truth, reviewed the precious things that God has in store for them that love Him, all seemed to be drawn very close to the Lord and to one another by the great bond of love Divine. In addition to the brethren who are more or less accustomed to addressing, the conferences in the East was our dear Brother Shearn of London who has just completed a very

successful pilgrimage and ministry amongst the brethren in this country. Another was Brother Blackburn who is well known and appreciated by many of the friends in Canada and the States who have enjoyed the blessing of his ministry for some years.

As opportunity was afforded at the Conference at Ulster Park, the brethren gave testimony setting forth how the way has been with them, how the Lord has been making good His promises, and how by His loving providence He has been keeping their feet from falling. The good resolution and determination was repeatedly expressed to persevere in the way of the Lord, walking in the footsteps of the great Head of the Church unto the end of the earthly pilgrimage, in the hope of being united With Him and with all the faithful by the power of the First Resurrection. Surely he that hath this hope purifieth himself even as the Lord is pure.